E SHILLINGS
SIXPENCE

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EMBER 1961

UME 1 NO. 9

Vernon Watkins Two Poems

Jack Cope The Man Who Doubted

Malcolm Lowry Three Poems

Gordon Meyer The Laugh

Edwin Brock Three Poems

Denis Donoghue The Human Image in Yeats

Francis Fytton Paris Letter

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NEW SERIES

EDITED BY
ALAN ROSS

The London Magazine

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Introduction

December is as good a month as any for a progress report. This is the ninth issue since the new series began, and our sales, subscribers and advertising revenue graphs all show a steady rise. To our advertisers, particularly to those who take regular space, I want in the simplest way to say thank you; a review such as this, when costs in every department in the printing industry increase at an alarming rate, must depend to a great extent on advertising. Whether those who advertise with us at present do so out of good will, for prestige, or as strictly a commercial gesture, we do not think their money will be wasted. There is no capital in the world where this magazine is not sold and read. If we could get support from industry comparable to that which we enjoy from publishers, we could devote as much time to editing as to the pure economics of the business. Most literary reviews are backed by foundations, assisted by grants, but we must make our own way. We have no subsidy, we produce the magazine as well as we can afford, and we sell it more cheaply than we should. We have chosen, while adding to the range of contents, the number of illustrations and pages, to keep the price the same, because we have wished to deter, on grounds of price, no potential reader, however young or poor. We have recently acquired distributors in the United States, and are negotiating for them in France and Italy. Our readers and contributors should share the rewards of this with our advertisers.

Needless to say, we must continue to work for two things: a still further increase in advertising and subscribers. It is round the latter that an accurate estimate of our print order can most helpfully be based. If half our casual readers were to subscribe, or half our existing subscribers were to give a year's subscription, this Christmas, to a friend, the benefit to us would be crucial. Survival is the least of our ambitions: with more general support from the galleries we should be able to increase our coverage of the visual arts, especially in illustration. With the guarantee that only subscriptions give, we should be able to plan in a way that fluctuating bookstall sales make difficult. What tends to happen at present is that numerous bookstalls sell out on publication day and their managers, involved with 500 other commodities, fail to re-order, with a consequent loss in sales to us and the annoyance of potential readers. To those who write in saying they have been unable to get copies, there can, politely, be only one answer: subscribe. We simply have not enough staff to

travel the country checking stocks at shops and stalls.

Essentially, a review can do one of two things: it can stand for something specific, critically or politically, in relation to the arts, or it can take on a life of its own, independent of fixed moral attitudes, which reflects no more nor less than the often divergent tastes of its editor and contributors. There are moments when the first seems much the most important: it is certainly easier to accomplish, makes more initial impact and simplifies the whole process of editing. At wrong periods, when movements in literature or art seem not to be revolutionary in either their technical or political context, any imposed view of what ought to be the writer's or painter's attitude to his material, leads to inhibition or wilful idiocy. The simpleton builds his own cage, in which he may whistle happily or fume resentfully.

The hazard of the alternative may seem to be that no prevailing critical attitude, supposing this to be desirable, is ever established. Poems, stories, critical articles based on a variety of premises, on widely different assumptions about the nature of art and the human situation, get in for the sole reason that we think them good. But good by what standards, by what terms of reference? It might appear that the answer to this should be doctrinal, or at least specific in its basic assumptions about the purposes of art in a free, or potentially free society. In practice, of course, even if one persisted in a Marxist view, such a question answers itself: good because it is well-written, because it increases our understanding of human motives, because it entertains, or makes us look again at the patterns of the past, the potentialities of the present; because it seems relevant, urgent, and to the point. This, in fact, as well as involving a whole new series of definitions, may say no more than that works of art create their own logic, which has no necessary or immediately obvious relation to existing opinion or to what has preceded them. They are suddenly seen to exist, with a kind of natural inevitability. One could, and would, refuse to print anything racially intolerant, anti-semitic or stultifyingly communist (despite the fact that many distinguished writers and painters have been, or are, manifestly one or more of these things) on the grounds that such views are anti-art, anti-human life, and serve only a destructive purpose.

All this goes without saying; but much of the best writing and painting at any given moment is not concerned—at least on a politically analysable level—with the events of its time. One might wish more of it were, though no sooner does one write this, than the doubts and ambiguities crowd in. We propose nevertheless to carry out an inquiry among, in the first instance, poets, about the relationship of art to action in a society threatened as never before, and

we shall print the results in February.

We may make our phrases about judging art by its style, effectiveness, urgency or quality of protest, but if we stand for any one thing, above all, it must be for the belief that, now more than ever, art cannot afford to be concerned with triviality, that if he is not centrally situated in the life of his community, the artist will become the most peripheral and expendable human being of all. It is a matter of self-preservation, which has nothing to do with the demands of propaganda or journalism. Art (and within art, the various arts) and society develop separately, at a separate pace, and one cannot be forced to contribute to the other along arbitrarily laid-down lines. Abstract painting may seem an anomaly, or a perverse influence, in a Soviet society, but social realism, or anything else, as an imposition bears the seeds of its own death. The recent Paris Biennale made plain, once and for all, that abstract art, whether one likes it or not, has killed the mixed show; it requires a painter of dominating stature to defy the fashions of his time, and he can do this only on grounds of his own choosing. What lies beyond abstraction in its present form is another subject we propose to have discussed in a future issue.

If our concern must be mainly for what is new and exciting, experimental in what we consider a fruitful rather than a futile sense, we shall continue in 1962 to re-examine the literature and painting of the past with contemporary eyes. The writers of long short stories and of the extended critical essay, have, in general, a thin time, and for that reason we shall all the more welcome them in these pages.

Most literary prizes are decided by committees, obliged to compromise, or as a result of lobbying by vested interests. Value and prestige do not always go hand in hand. We hope each December to give two prizes, to the poet and to the prose writer who have given us the most personal pleasure, without, in our eyes, receiving their proper due. Since the editor's taste alone will be involved, there need happily be no concessions. A magnum of champagne (which is worth, at current prices, more than the Prix Goncourt), therefore, to Bernard Spencer for his book of poems *The Twist in the Plotting* (University of Reading), with the hope that some professional publisher will now bring out this most sparing, personal and passionate of contemporary poets in a suitable edition; also to James Kennaway whose novel *Household Ghosts* (Longmans) was as elegant, stylish, difficult and humanly rewarding a book as anything since the early Henry Green. Compared to the puffed up, slipshod, facetious and over-praised novels of Miss X and Mr Y this seemed like the work of a dedicated and lonely master.

ALAN ROSS

Two Poems

PHAEDRA

Absence divided us.
Now it is meeting
Tears us apart:
O heart, stop beating.

I have a right to anger.
I was preceded.
The bridebed I shared
Had served another.

She was the mother
Of my undoing.
Without her Hippolytus
Had not been seeded.

Theseus took her
To bed when younger.
Had their embraces
Raised a girl,

I had been spared
This present ruin:
The thread of perdition
Had not been spun.

My lord, my guest,
At your suspicion
He has confessed
The breakers over us.

He has not come.
It is the wall
Draws with vermilions
The charging bull.

Why must the stallions
Kick their traces?
I and his son
Undone before him.

Hippolytus: what made
These eyes adore him?
She is the guilty one,
She who bore him.

Theseus the Shade,
Dead, yet living,
Strength coupled
With pitiless anger.

So long in mortal danger,
Then, one day,
Killing the Minotaur,
While I forgot him.

Where is my refuge
From the unforgiving?
Had she not known him
I had not been troubled.

Where is Hippolytus?
Had I obeyed,
My guilt had spoken;
The son had stayed.

How shall I gainsay
His noble lying,
Looking on Hades?
Thunders begot him.

The Minotaur's shadow
Travels the wall.
Sea-wrack and refuse
On us shall fall.

I hear him coming.
His footfall stays.
What way but dying
Out of this maze?

RESTING PLACES

The rose divines her night:
White, thrusting roots grasp earth, where light began.

The seashell grinds its mark,
Dark in the cold miles of the naked beach.

Soul in a sculptor's hand
Spanned more desire than schools will ever teach.

Adam lies fast in Rome:
The moment's magnitude brought near to man.

He drew that body's praise,
Gazing on God. What centuries have since

Turned from those eyes to wage
Ageless, destructive war, all worth made cheap.

Hushed in a single nave,
Grave Angelo and Galileo sleep.

From hands of one were born
Morning and Night, who rest beneath their Prince,

While the next hand explored
Orders of stars no naked eye could reach.

There Santa Croce climbs
Time's holy scaffolding where planets spin.

Time turns; and in death camps
Lamps light the way to lampshades made of skin,

Whose dread contracts the brow.
How can we bring the ransom they beseech

Where, as one prisoner falls,
Walls paint in sleep the murder of his kin?

Such blood on Lethe's stream
Dreams cannot purge. Yet ask: what tongue ruled sin?

What put to shame that strumpet?
The trumpet which accompanied brave speech.

BERTOLT BRECHT

Tales from the Calendar

Yvonne Kapp and **Michael Hamburger** have translated this collection of stories, poems and anecdotes. It was compiled by Brecht himself immediately on his return to Germany from exile in 1947 and contains most of the short stories he wrote and considered worth preserving. This volume is in the same format as *Bertolt Brecht: Plays*, Volume I, published last year. **15s**

METHUEN

The Man Who Doubted

He came up out of the mist at dusk towards the veranda steps. The farmer was scraping the mud off his boots on a sharp iron scraper and he turned slowly hearing the soft footsteps on the wet ground. As their eyes met, the Zulu raised his arm in a grand and gaunt salute. 'Inkosana!'

His greatcoat was an ancient military khaki darkened with grease and ending in tatters around his bare calves, and in his left hand he trailed a knobkerrie and a stick as well as a small branch of wild olive with faded dull-green leaves. At his side, carrying a small blanket bundle was a bare-footed boy who looked so like him as to be unmistakably his son. He did not speak again but waited in a courteous silence until the white man should either recognize him or ask who he was.

He was so striking in all the singleness of his dignity, stripped down by illness and poverty and anxiety to the last degree, that the farmer felt a keen pang of sympathy, searching the ravaged face for recognition. They were of the same age and height, both tall graceful men, but the black one looked doubly aged beside the ruddy weathered features of the other.

Glancing between father and son the farmer found his clue suddenly and out of the shadow of thirty years a face came back to him of a handsome youth. 'Ha, it is you, Matan, I see!'

The Zulu raised his head and a quick and grateful smile bloomed on him. His white teeth shone and the heavy lines were loosened for a moment. 'Inkosana, you are one who seldom makes a mistake.'

'I wouldn't say that.'

'You have grown more like your father, and his voice speaks again in you. But I see that you carry a scar.'

The white man ran his fingers over a deep scar from the corner of his eye and disappearing in his hair. 'The iron of a cannon hit me, in the war. They nearly buried me.'

'Instead, you buried your enemies,' Matan said, deeply satisfied. No greater mark of honour could a man bear than the wound of battle on his face.

'I wouldn't say that,' the farmer repeated. 'No, but you are ill and cold. Go

and warm yourself and get some food. Then we can speak together.'

'First I will tell you, Inkosana, that I have come to fetch home my father.'

'How's that?' the farmer asked quietly, hiding his surprise. 'Your father has lain buried here for thirty years.'

'I have come for his spirit.'

They both were aware that this opened up between them such imponderable questions that they said nothing for a few moments until with another grave salute Matan went off, followed by his small son, to the compound of the farm labourers.

After the evening meal the farmer's wife was in the kitchen store-room packing eggs for market. The farmer came in to ask about some accounts and at the same time Matan appeared at the kitchen door. He had left his sticks but still held the branch of wild olive. In the strong light his face was like a deeply-carved rock and the feverish black eyes alone betrayed him. The small boy came behind, peering round the skirts of his ragged coat.

'Come inside, Matan,' the farmer said, and turning to his wife: 'This is the man.'

The Zulu greeted her in the same majestic way and she answered, 'San'bona.'

'San'bona,' said the black maid and went on with her work.

Matan came closer into the lamplight and squatted down on his hams in a ceremonial manner which meant that he had grave things to discuss. The farmer asked where he lived and how were his family and at this he looked troubled, several times passing his hand over his eyes. He had lived in many places since he had left the Thorn country. Now he had found a place again in the umSuluzi valley and had a garden to cultivate but no oxen yet and no plough.

'And your family?' the farmer repeated, thinking of his own three children tucked safe in their beds and his eldest son away for the first term at boarding school. When he glanced again at Matan he sensed a quiver on the rigid lips and he was appalled to see that tears had come to the sunken, burning eyes.

'This is my family,' the Zulu said, reaching out and touching his son with a bony finger. 'All the others I have lost. Two sons and a daughter I lost. My wife I lost. But this one is left to me and now I have a place again and across the umSuluzi stream I can see where my father's kraal stood.'

'Oh, so you are on Dunc's?'

'I am on Dunc's.'

'Why did you not come to me? I would give you a place. You may build again where your father's huts were and plough his old lands. All those you

gave up when you left.'

Matan thought over his answer and after clearing his throat he said: 'I am not ready. Now it is this that my heart tells me to say. When I had come to manhood and we were of an age my father worked for yours.'

'I remember Makofin well. I remember the accident. I went to call the doctor and we rode out on our horses in the night.'

'Inkosana, it was the long red wagon that cut him nearly in two. I was walking behind and my father carried the whip. He slipped as he put one foot on the wagon pole and he fell under the wheels. The oxen pulled the wagon over him with a load of corn and I dragged him out from under the wheels—my father. He was dying, I could see.'

'He did not cry out.'

'In the night he died. Our people buried him here. Inkosana, child of your father, think of mine too. He has been lying here for thirty years under the cold trees of the forest, in this cold country. He has been alone. Where this red wagon called Satan is working and its trek-cattle that killed my father, I cannot stay. I went off and I have been everywhere. I have been to the Gold Mines, I worked in the sugar-cane. I married and found a place with the Ntulis but wherever I have gone evil followed me. . . .

'Evil has followed me,' he said again hollowly after a long pause.

'A son was born and I was glad. Then again, another son. I did not believe it. I thought the evil had left me. My first-born withered and shrivelled to a stick and he died. Then I believed it again. I took up my goods and drove my cattle away and always the evil has followed me. . . . No, why tell you all that happened? Now I am left with this stripling —'

He looked round for the boy and at last caught sight of him through the kitchen door doing a lively little dance in front of the stove. He was a mischievous boy, sprightly and difficult to handle. Often he had to be given a cuff on the head and then tears burst from his eyes. But a moment later he was dancing and singing again.

The father turned away with a shrug and then, as if by an afterthought, he said: 'So then I have come to bring my father home.'

The two white people waited in a strained way but the black girl gazed at him goggle-eyed. He had expected it, but now it devoured his insides. He went on, stumbling somewhat over his words, to say he had been to one who knew of these things. The man had him beat the ground, and he had thrown bones. He was a witch-doctor—isangoma. He said the evil had been sent by Makofin, father of Matan, because he lay two days' journey away, alone in the cold

drizzling trees; two days from his home which was in the Thorn Country. There he had owned cattle and grown corn and the sun was hot on his body. The witch-doctor had cooked medicine and dipped the leaves of a branch into his medicine-pot. He had said: 'Watch one night by the grave.' Makofin's ghost would climb out of the grave, he had said, and settle in the leaves of the branch. The son must then carry the ghost home to the Thorn Country in silence, unbroken silence, and bury it there. Peace would come at last to him. One word spoken by him during this journey home would send the ghost crying back to its cold grave.

He drew out the branch of wild olive from under his coat-flaps and raising it he said: 'On this I will take my father home.'

The farmer and his wife glanced at each other but the maid flung up her hands with a cry of fear and darted out of the room. He took this sign from her without emotion and scarcely moved his head. Perhaps in his blood this sign of absolute belief worked profoundly but it was with the other two that he was concerned as he put down the branch and tried to compose himself.

He did not look up at them, not because they might despise the witch-doctors or that he feared their disbelief. His great terror lay in his own doubt. He took out his snuff-box and his hands shook as he uncorked it and put in his palm a small heap of snuff. Then, clearing his throat and swallowing, he found the measure of calm he needed to put the point of his visit in an open-hearted way:

Perhaps it was beyond a man to make a long journey without uttering a word. His lips could open in his sleep, or without thinking he might say something to a passer-by or to his son who would not remember always to speak correctly. If a truck were driving to the Thorn Country . . . in short, if the farmer could take him home with his father's shadow and his son, the three of them, it would be well with them.

He waited for the reply, greatly perturbed, and took his time with another pinch of snuff. He could hear his boy in the other room, singing to himself, while the two spoke low in their own language. Then the woman asked: 'Matan, did you pay the isangoma?'

'It is the custom,' he mumbled as if angry at such a question.

'What did you pay him?'

'A cow,' he said shortly, and then added: 'It was my last cow.'

'And do you really believe in this?'

It was the question that crawled under his skin, that pestered and devoured

him, and with a sound like a groan he threw back his head.

'Inkosazana, what else can I do?'

'I don't know. I did not know your father as my husband did, but would his soul follow you with evil? Would you wish evil on your own son?'

'Let it be!' he said wildly.

She was on the point of saying more, so cool in her knowledge and goodwill that she would drive a hole into his heart if only to enlighten him. But the man put a hand on her arm to quiet her.

'Matan, I am not going to the Thorn Country. My truck is broken down; it's at the garage to be repaired. But you can go with the wagon in the morning and from the cross-roads the milk truck will take you to the railway. And so you can ride in the train down to the Thorns and get home in one day.'

The Zulu averted his face without a word. He had only a few shillings knotted in a cloth and the rail fare would leave him penniless. His son had come to the door and heard what the plan was, and he skipped delightedly at the thought of a ride in the milk truck and in a train, marvels he had never enjoyed. The father stood up stiffly and saluted the white people. He went out leaning one hand on the child's shoulder and with the other carrying the bough from which he had not parted since he left home.

'What can you do with them?' the woman said. 'Good heavens—the idea!'

'You know, I had an eerie feeling always at Makofin's grave. I can remember them burying him sewn all crouched up in a blanket, and they put in some food and pots and a knobkerrie and assegai to see him on his way. Makofin was a hellfire fighting man and the others were scared enough of him alive but ten times more scared of him dead. The boys are going to be glad about Matan taking the old man's ghost home. They never liked the grave down in the forest.'

'He looks so ill,' she said, 'Fierce but somehow tortured, eh? Worried to death.'

He merely glanced at her and shrugged. His way with the Zulus was to get along as well as he could without bumping headlong into them on dangerous ground, and he did not push things down their throats. It had been silly of her, he thought, to ask that question. How could you ask a man whether he really believed in a thing that went to the centre of his life?

'About this account with the vet . . .' he began.

*

Matan walked down in the dark from the house of the white people and he still leaned one hand on his child. A moon was sliding in and out of the clouds

and the wind blew cold and damp. Passing the open shed, he saw the wagon. The farm used tractors and motor vehicles now but they kept the old trek-wagon standing there with its heavy iron-ringed pole slung up as if ready to roll out again on its fatal way. Ever since it had cut his father almost in two it had been called Satan and the men, even those who had seen neither Makofin nor any of his family, had a kind of awe for it. He went past, looking fearfully into the dark mouth of the shed, and he said nothing but listened to the chatter of the boy about the tasty food he had been given in the kitchen.

Matan sat in the great circular hut of the compound joining the ring of men around the fire. He was of their clan and they were all tied by ancient blood bonds one to another, yet he had noticed how his entry had put a hush on them. They offered him food and went on dipping their clean fingers in the black iron cooking pots, but they were like chickens when a hawk has flown over. The little boy edged close to a pot and soon he was eating ravenously, scooping out hot lumps of delicious steamed corn and potatoes and sweet pumpkin.

Matan ate nothing and he did not speak. Seated on a polished wood-block he leaned towards the leaping flames of the fire. He had tried to conceal as much as possible the wild-olive branch and had it under the folds of his coat-tails. Presently he opened his coat and bared his bony chest to the heat. He had a skin amulet hanging at his throat by a blackened string and a medicine-horn from some small antelope stuck as an earring through the lobe of one ear, and with his forbidding, deep-furrowed face shining like oiled wood, he looked to the others hardly a man at all but a shadowing of death itself. Some of the men got up and went out and from under his heavy brow he shot them wild, desperate glances.

He waited a little longer, reluctant to go down into the night and the forest, and occasionally he looked at his son still busy at the cooking-pot. When the boy could no longer force another mouthful down his throat but sat back with his stomach drum-tight Matan told him sharply to find a place among the boys and go to sleep. He went outside and came back with his hands and small shining face wet from a good rinsing at the tap. He was thrown a few clean grain bags with which he made himself a bed on the clay floor and soon he lay rolled from head to foot like a small mummy in his blanket. Suppressing a sigh, Matan got up and buttoned his greatcoat close about him. He armed himself with his stick and knobkerrie. The others pretended not to notice his going.

By beaten footpaths he picked a way past cornlands and large fields standing in young kale and turnips for winter cattle feed, the ground falling all the while

towards the fringe of trees. The clouds had come over dark and thick and the moon gave a vague sense of light in the sky. Once inside the trees the darkness became so close that it seemed he had to push his way through it.

He knew where the grave was and approaching it he crept even slower. His eyes were strained open to catch the least hint of light. A rustle went faintly through the upper foliage and from the occasional touches of cold on his face he knew a fine rain had started. Big drops fell with a lone splash from the trees on his head or down his neck. Then he was at the grave, sensing the hollowness of the dark clearing around him. He was confused at hearing loud persistent noises, only they were inside his head and the forest was quiet save for the slow shudder of drops on the leaves.

He put his stick and the olive branch under one arm and, with some difficulty over the trembling of his hands, he managed to strike a match. For a moment the flare of light chased away shadows into the thicket and fell on the pyramid of earth and stones under which his father lay buried. Before the match flickered out he saw the green moss and grass on the grave-mound and the long trailing beards of lichen drooping from the trees. He noticed in that moment that the ring of stones surrounding the base of the mound was half buried in green mould. A wet and dreary and silent place, and any spirit lying drowned and bitter under the tree roots would heave and writhe in its suffocation. If it were true! It was starting in him again; at the foot of his father's grave itself the doubt came at him and a cold band pressed round his forehead and temples.

He stood for a while and took hold on himself. He must not dare think such thoughts. He must follow the witch-doctor to the letter—it was his last resort. What else could he do? Ai! with a start he remembered he had used those same words to the white woman. She had asked if he believed. Woman-like, she had put her finger in the eye of his sore. What if he did doubt? He must keep to the finest hair of the isangoma's instructions and provided the truth lay there then all must be well. He would regain his health, cattle again would stand in his kraal and his child grow up like a corn-stalk to the sun. And if the white people were right? Could there be two truths?

He tried to heave himself up out of the clawing blackness, straightened his back and raised his head. 'Father, I am here,' he said. His breast at once felt calmer, and he began to make preparations for the watch through the night. He edged forward until his sandal touched the stones of the grave, then he struck one more match and keeping it alight in his cupped hand made his way to the nearest tree. There he settled himself with his back to the moss-covered

roots and tucking his coat as well as possible around his knees he took the olive branch in one hand. A cold drop coursed down his forehead and nose. It was no longer raining and he found to his dread that he was in a heavy sweat. His whole body had gone clammy and the thin singlet under his coat was soaked and cold.

He sighed and muttered to himself. He would feel better if something came to share his watch, a bushbuck or perhaps an ox or even a hare. No other man would dare come there. But it was a lonely place and a little-used path. Cattle kept the track open and maybe at night the small denizens of the trees would dart along it frightened by the coughing of a leopard. He would welcome a leopard.

The air seemed to become warmer and then the clouds opened and moonlight came filtering down through the treetops into the clearing. He could make out the shape of the grave mound and at a distance the pale streaks against the black which he knew, though they seemed to be moving, were tree-trunks. He had to close his eyes to escape the appearance that the trees were moving about. After some time had passed he heard the growl of thunder and he thought he understood that strange wave of warmth and the closeness of the air that was hammering against his chest as if with soft fists.

Cold, rain—rain and cold, did it never stop here in the thin high veld? 'My father, I have left you a long while,' he said with his voice croaking. An answer came in another rumble of thunder. He waited, thinking of his father, and he began speaking to him. . . . 'My father, Makofin, son of Poli, why have you come as a thief and taken everything from me? It was not so before. You were a fighting man and born of great blood and your word was respected. Did they leave you too little food for your journey and have you eaten grasshoppers on the bare hill? My father, if you kill me and my last son, who will be left to pray and comfort you—what home will you return to when you journey up from there below to see the sun again?'

He spoke in the form of the old prayers but in his blood was the feeling that he should be given some sign, and because no sign came he was left hollow and beaten and the evil that held him by the throat was beyond him. Flashes of lightning were flickering palely among the trees and the thunder groaned nearer, vibrating the air and thudding on the ground as if some great beast were on the trail.

The wind came tearing down with a great roar into the forest and thunder ripped and boomed in the sky striking trees and hilltops while the rain fell in huge dark waves. Gullies of water poured and washed against him and he

crouched more into himself, wet and shivering and almost unconscious of his purpose in being there.

The rain passed and the wind died and silence and darkness came back over the forest. He thought of his father's ghost in the underworld shivering at an empty spot and a dead fire while the water from the cold earth dripped muddily over him. Alone he was too, and malignant, and his eyes glaring red like those of a man wild with death or sorrow.

The vision was so clear and striking to his inner mind that he thought it a dream and he had been asleep or was still sleeping. The branch of wild olive seemed to be moving in his hand and with a thrill of horror he dropped it, then grabbed at it, feeling about in the dark in case it should be snatched away. When he had seized it again with a shaking hand he was sure that it moved of its own and so great a desire filled him to run for his life that his legs began twitching like a dog in its hunting dreams. Closing his eyes, he forced his head and back against the tree until his muscles stopped jerking and he could no longer feel any movement, not in his legs nor in the twig nor the hand that held it.

He opened his eyes vaguely and was staring upwards. There was light, faint light. The moon had come through and was dropping a dim ray among the still treetops. Here and there the mere phantom of a tree-trunk. Slowly he searched into the cave of the clearing and then fixed on a place above the grave. He stared for a long time, not believing his senses, blinked slowly and looked again. Over the grave stood a large white shape, there was no mistake. And as the moon ran out of the clouds and its light seeped down to the earth the shape took clearer form and he could see two dark hollows where it would have eyes.

'Makofin, son of Poli,' he grated out, though his lips and tongue were almost paralysed. 'Ha! do you come to turn your son's bones to water! Come with me home to the umSuluzi.'

He could now see two strange shapes like great horns rising above it and in a swaying movement the head shook. A cry came from Matan's throat. He tried to struggle to his feet, rolled to one side and fell. His body shivered all over and a foam hissed from his mouth and nostrils.

The moon was covered by a dark cloudbank and complete darkness crept over the veld and into every crevice of the dripping forest. Far down at the foot of a tall tree the black man lay fighting for breath and oblivious of everything. The owls flew down from their roost in a hammerkop's nest, a leopard made its coughing grunt as it padded along the trail. A rustling and crashing

sounded among the trees, heavy beating of hooves and then the return of silence.

Still the man lay on his side and ants began to crawl on him. At the first lightening of the sky he stirred and tried to open his eyes. He felt blinded, scratched and clawed at his face and then screamed out. His face was covered with ants. He rolled and whipped over on the grass like an eel and by brushing and beating at his face with his coat sleeves he cleaned himself and then began to kill off and shake the ants out of his coat. His limbs felt weak and he was unnerved in every fibre of his body. But in spite of his dread of the place he raised his hand as steadily as he could and said: 'Makofin, son of Poli, I came in peace. Now you too, be no thief. To me, your son, give back peace.' He gathered up his sticks and, with one fearful glance at it, took up also the wild-olive branch.

Then he set off to return to the compound, but walked slowly like an old man. Passing beyond the grave, he noticed in the turf the hoofprints of an ox. He leant heavily on his stick, pausing there for some moments, deeply shocked, and all his doubts came back with a new agony. When had the ox stood there—during the night, or before? There was water in one of the hoofmarks. His head was nodding as with an illness when he started again, and at sunrise he arrived back at the compound.

Matan crouched like some old tree-trunk among the milk-cans on the wagon. It seemed that by contrast with his gloom and silence and with the awe he inspired in the other farm workers, the small boy had become all the more sprightly. He danced and skipped alongside the trolly, threw stones at a flock of starlings, whistled gaily or sang to himself at every step of the way to the crossroads. The farm workers kept wide of the man whom they believed to be carrying the ghost of his father but the boy had almost taken command now that he had had the task of guiding him home.

Matan transferred in silence to the heavy milk truck while loud explanations were made and shouts of amazement exchanged with the loading crew. Then the truck started off; the boy shrilled and laughed and opened his mouth to feel the roar of wind in his cheeks.

At the railhead the child made all the explanations while his father fumbled open his damp cloth and handed over one by one the shillings and florins to pay the fare. Then, aboard the train, the boy dashed up and down the corridors, hung out on the balcony rails and scrambled over people's feet in the crowded compartment where his father sat stony and silent with lips sewn together in a terrible bitterness. In a shrill voice the boy explained that the olive

branch had been doctored and on it was roosting none other than the ghost of his grandfather.

With one accord the passengers yelled out and made a concerted dash to get out at the door, struggling and cursing and knocking the child over in their hurry to escape. When the last of them had disappeared, there, lying in the middle of the floor, was a silver sixpence. The boy picked it up with a chirp of pleasure and ran after the gabbling passengers. He tossed it in the air and caught it, shouting: 'Who lost this? Who lost this?' They were too angry or scared to notice him and so he tied it into a ragged corner of his vest.

The passengers complained about the ghost and some minutes later the ticket examiner came to restore order. 'You can't travel with a ghost,' he said to Matan and was answered by a glimmer of anger from eyes so sunken and reddened that even he was taken aback.

'I'm not sure, you may need another ticket for the spook,' he said. And Matan, seeing the smile of contempt, turned away his face to hide his rage and dismay. 'Why don't you answer?'

'He is my father and he has lost his voice,' the boy said.

'Well, he'll have to chuck the ghost out of the window or ride on the balcony,' the official said. 'I can't have the corridor blocked with passengers.'

Matan rose unsteadily and made his way out along the corridor and to the balcony, still gripping his sticks and bundle and his olive bough. The other passengers hurried past or pretended not to see the thin and haggard man keeping his balance precariously as the train jolted and swayed on the curves and gradients.

There he stayed until the train pulled in at the station of Colenso alongside the broad muddy Tugela River with the great water-towers and smokestacks of the central power station rising like a giant out of the bush-dotted and almost empty plain. Matan climbed down to the platform, made his way across to a bench and, sinking down exhausted, watched the train pull out. He had not eaten for two days and a fever ran in his veins. The boy raced up and down in a daze of happiness.

He loved the machines and heavy electric engines, the maze of power-lines, intricate transformer plant where black men in smart uniforms were at work, the hiss and whirr of strange things, and high above all the great plumes of smoke going up in the blue sky. He would one day work in the power station, he thought. His father sat on the bench recovering his strength while the boy played. He untied the sixpence and threw it up in the air.

Matan watched the boy and thought of continuing his journey, this time on foot over the ridge and into the umSuluzi valley. He saw the coin make a a bright arc, land on the platform and roll over the edge. His son looked down at the rail-track where his sixpence had fallen. A train drawn by a green electric locomotive was coming quietly and swiftly into the platform and the boy, without seeing it, was on the point of leaping down to the track.

From the bench Matan could not reach him in time. *'Bheka!'* he yelled. *'Iyez' isitimela!'* (Watch out—the train's coming!) The child turned and, seeing the locomotive, flinched back as if struck. The passenger train glided through the station without halting and after the last coach and the van had passed by he looked down and there was his coin still lying in the ballast. He jumped lightly over to recover it.

Quickly he climbed up again, clutching the sixpenny piece in his fist, and ran to his father. With shining eyes, he said: 'Father, you spoke!'

Matan had the branch across his knees and, his lips half drawn back from his teeth in an expression like a snarl, he watched it intently. He did not hear or see his son. But nothing happened to the smallest leaf on the branch. He did not quite know what he had expected. Perhaps, if the long shadow of his father had indeed been riding on the bough, it would have made some sign of its departure, withering or blighting the leaves or setting them on fire. Yet nothing happened and the terrible suspicion swelled again in him that there was no bringing home of his ancestors, there was no averting the evil following him, no way of controlling his destiny. What must be, must be.

'Come,' he said mildly to the boy. 'Let us go.' He walked now with an effort and his tall straight back was slightly stooped. A fierce energy drove him on and the boy frequently ran a few paces or jogged at his father's side clinging to the ragged and flapping greatcoat.

They kept for some miles to the dusty district road. The sun's heat danced from the hard clay and shale and in the bush the sun-beetles droned and shrilled. The man kept his eyes fixed ahead and passing any stranger he merely raised his free hand in a silent gesture. 'My father cannot speak,' the boy explained, and they hurried on. Down through the thorn scrub they turned on an ancient footpath worn by countless human feet and the hooves of cattle, and they did not slacken pace. Sweat dripped from Matan's chin and the boy trotting behind gasped for breath, his bare feet burning.

A few times they stopped at a stream to drink a little water and rinse their faces, and they crossed the slow-running umSuluzi at a drift. At last they came to their home, two thatch beehive huts set at the foot of a rocky hill, and an

old woman, who was a relative of Matan's mother, stopped grinding corn and fetched him a drink in a calabash. She regarded him with intense alarm and had noticed how much he had changed for the worse, but she tried to keep her face turned aside as she attended to him and did not speak except in greeting.

He left the boy with her and from the blackened thatch inside his hut drew out a long-bladed fighting assegai. He placed the branch at the back of the hut with a bowl of milk and went out again into the afternoon sun, carrying his assegai as well as his sticks. At the drift across the umSuluzi he stopped to polish the blade of his spear, taking fine sand and a piece of pumice to hone off the spots of rust. He washed it down in the clear water and dried the glittering blade on his sleeve. It was illegal and dangerous to carry such a weapon but he cared little for that.

A quick walk through the bush brought him at sunset to a wealthy kraal where many cattle and goats were being penned by small boys for the night. The huts were built of stone with stout thatch roofs out of which thrust poles and sticks surmounted by various skulls and horns of animals and blown-up bladders. One hut alone was of the traditional all-thatch pattern and was even weathered and dilapidated in a kind of mock humility, and here he found the isangoma expecting him.

'You have spoken, you opened your mouth!' the man accused him without any ceremony.

'I have spoken—what matter?'

'Did you remember what I said?'

'I remembered.' Matan turned on him ferociously and glared almost maddened at the crafty and intelligent face obscure in the growing darkness.

'Why have you come here armed?'

'I came to hear what you will say. I want to know if my father has returned. I want to know if I will be given peace, I and my son.'

'How can I say? You have broken the command of the spirits.'

'I paid you my last cow to do this—and you will do it, son of Noqomfela.'

'Have you come to threaten me, one who can destroy you with his little finger?'

'I must have an answer. Come with me now and attend to the burial of my father's shadow. The grave is ready. And if you say he has not come home then I swear to you, evil-doer, I will send your ghost to fetch him.'

He laid his palm along the shining blade of the spear to make himself clear to the doctor and then stooping under the low door he came out into the open. Together and in single file they returned on the path through the bush.

The isangoma walked ahead, a slight old man wearing a monkey-fur cap and carrying a thin blackwood wand. It was dusk.

The grave was in a hollow near the river and over it rose the pale-dusty ominous trunk of a fever-tree. Matan had dug it himself before leaving. He brought the branch of wild olive and some pots of beer and corn and he led a goat on a thong for the sacrifice. He quickly cut the goat's throat with the sharp edge of his assegai blade and disembowelled it. While he struck a match the witch-doctor studied the fat on the entrails and slit out the gall-bladder. The match went out and now the moon shone down on them from a clear black sky. By its light Matan climbed down into the grave and carefully placed the pots of food and beer. When he raised himself he saw the other had scratched together some twigs and lit a small fire. On it he sprinkled powder from a horn and a thick, acrid smoke hissed out, flowing like a liquid down the lip of the new grave. Matan coughed heavily.

'Leave your weapon too,' the doctor said. But he gripped the gleaming, blood-stained spear all the tighter and began slowly to climb out. He was weak and heavy in his limbs, fighting tenaciously to keep his balance. The fever raced in his veins and his head was ringing. Now he was out and the isangoma stood to face him.

'Has my father's long shadow returned?' he demanded.

'He has returned.'

'Then you lied to me. Words escaped my mouth and still you say he is here. This way or that way you are lying.'

'It was too far for him to fly back to the umLambongwenya so he continued the journey with you. He is here, he is satisfied.'

'This is another lie. I have not heard his voice.'

'You do not hear and see because your life is nearing an end. Son of Makofin you are dying.'

'That is at least the truth,' he said slowly and bitterly, leaning on the haft of his assegai. 'I feel it. . . . I will not live many days.'

'You have given your life for your father, and for your son. . . .'

'Then let us die together,' Matan cried out, raising the spear in a sudden whirl of his thin but powerful arm. The witch-doctor shrieked as he stepped back.

*

At sunrise the boy came to search for his father and found him lying calm and serene on his back with his head propped on the roots of the fever-tree and his feet towards the open grave. Stuck fast inches deep into the bole of the tree was his stabbing assegai.

'How is it with my father?' he asked with a beating heart.

The man looked up gauntly and seeing his son his eyes softened. 'It goes well with me. Is the other here, the son of Noqomfela?'

'No.'

'Look about—is he not lying stabbed?'

'No, he is nowhere.'

'Look for my spear then.'

'It's here, in the tree.'

He raised his burning eyes and saw the haft and blade of his assegai standing out from the tree-trunk. At that he sighed as if greatly relieved.

'When you are old enough,' he said with difficulty, 'get back the place of your fathers and live there in peace. Let them bury me in the same grave which I dug for Makofin. Now we are home. One day you may have cattle again, and men children and girl children. I cannot give you anything.'

The boy twisted out of a knot in his vest the coin he had picked up. 'Look, I have sixpence. I will grow big and have boots to wear and work at the power station.'

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A ship long laid up is a filthy thing
Cabled with rust, débris of the shore gang,
Filters gangrened, only a homesick tang
Reminds us of our longed-for suffering:
The sea! The watches pass, the hours take wing
Like seagulls stuffed with bread. Tin-tin; pang-pang.
And this monotony is our *Sturm und Drang*
Of which few poets have the heart to sing.

I like to think we're scaling the old world
Down for a dose of red lead, as hammers snap
And ever grindstones wait to whet their lust.
Splendid to think so, yet in dreaming whirled
To abstract hulls, one falls into the trap
Set by that two-faced pimp who sees mere rust.

BYZANTIUM

—Don't come any of that Byzantium stuff
On me, me fine young toff! Just plain Stamboul
Is good enough fer me and Lamps and Bill.
Constantibloodynople's right enough—
Used to be, eh? Eh? Don't give me that guff
Like that wot you said about the ideal
—In a blind eye socket! But a girl's a girl
And bobhead tigers here'll treat you rough,
And give you ideal! . . . I bid adieu,
The siren moos: oh whither where away,
The engine stampedes: more fool you, hee hee,
And ukuleles mourn a ululu,
The iron groans: every dog will have its day,
And stars wink: Venus first then Mercury.

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The bosun is a pimp as white as snow.
Pox come with those grey hairs and worse than pox
Drop on them. When this ship ran on the rocks
Of course he was sleeping like a stick below.
And him with his 'Where are we, men?' at eight bells.
I never knew him utter a kind word.
He would have broken every man's heart aboard.
Then they've other stories the Chief Steward tells—
I wouldn't want to go into them now.
But the carpenter said he'd like to know
If there's a dirty trick he hasn't mastered.
Nothing remains to add about the man,
Seeing as how you're ladies; only swine,
Bugger, thief, and at the last, bastard.

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The Laugh

When Raymond and Casandra fell in love, she had been eight years the wife of Alejandro, an officer in one of the republic's oldest battleships. Her divorce and subsequent remarriage to Raymond, an Englishman, had no legal value in the Roman Catholic republic; but, as they did what everyone did in such circumstances—divorce and remarry through a neighbouring country—they encountered inconvenience only when filling in forms.

Nevertheless, old doña Inés, Casandra's mother, a strict Catholic, of Spanish descent—though there was talk of Indian somewhere—refused to recognize the divorce, and, in consequence, the second husband.

As far as she was concerned, it was Alejandro who was and always would be her daughter's husband, and, which perhaps meant more to her, would therefore always be her son-in-law; almost, in fact, her son.

Raymond she would not receive; she would not even allow his name to be uttered in her presence.

Raymond came to understand that, according to doña Inés, he was 'a bad one', had had many women, had abandoned his own wife, to run after another man's—a view of him to which, besides being untrue, he knew the old woman to have been adroitly assisted by Casandra's first husband.

For Alejandro had told her in long letters how 'el otro' ('the other one', as he called Raymond), had bought Casandra a motor car, thus accomplishing a rapid and easy conquest of her; how the President of the Republic had threatened personally to deprive him of his commission, because of the disgrace of the divorce (which, reflected Raymond ironically, was not a divorce).

Doña Inés wrote back that she understood, that he must have patience and faith, to see what God would decide. The divorce, in fact, drew them closer together.

Some two, or it may have been three years later Casandra wrote, inviting her father to the small apartment in which she and Raymond lived in the capital.

When her letter arrived at the flat-roofed house of her parents in the little pueblo of Cañada de López, there blew up a storm such as there never had been in the Guimera household—and there had been many—but Guimera

determined to have a look at last at the second husband.

He went, leaving the old woman trembling.

The old man, who knew his daughter to possess his own character, was amused to see that 'el inglés', as at first he called Raymond, had evidently tamed her. It was a sort of vicarious compliment.

The younger, in his turn, was amused at the other, who, like a bull smarting under the banderillas, ravaged the small apartment, uttering the coarsest of jests ('puteando', as they called it); who ate disgustingly ('but mercifully at full speed' Raymond said afterwards to Casandra); and who, mocking his sixty-eight years, restlessly coursed the capital for entertainment from sunrise until after the theatres closed at one or two in the morning. He appreciated Guimera because of his directness, absence of complexes and arrière-pensées—refreshing change, he thought, from the society of his youth.

—Your old man, he said to Casandra, as soon as they were alone for a moment, is so normal, he's almost animal.

The impression was strengthened one afternoon when, abandoning the amusements of the city, the three went to a pueblito in the province, to attend a horse-breaking fair, at which at one moment the old man, pounding his glass on the table, shouted to an acquaintance:

—Cheé! Pancho! Traigame una morocha. (Get hold of a black-haired one for me.)

To Guimera it mattered little whether she were pretty or not.

Although Raymond was still inclined to prefer subtlety to straightforwardness, finesse to ingenuousness, yet each man discerned in the other something they knew to be in themselves: a core that would not break.

Guimera returned to Cañada de López enchanted with his visit. For several hours he railed at his wife that Raymond was the very man for their daughter, that he would keep her in order as Alejandro had never been able to do, and, moreover, although clearly he was not demonstrative, he loved Casandra. Therefore, doña Inés had better stop living in the past, idolizing her daughter's first husband, and instead face the present, which contained the second.

The old woman, however, was adamant: not only did she still refuse to admit Raymond's name in the house; she maintained the fiction of Casandra's first marriage never having broken. To her neighbours, continuing to ask after Alejandro, she naturally continued to reply in such words as: 'He's well, thank you; very well. I'm hoping he will soon get leave, so that the two of them can come together next time.'

She loved Alejandro, because he had had time for her, used to send her little presents from the ports at which his ship called (when it put to sea), and had sat for hours, telling her of his life at sea—something she would die without seeing. These talks had been replaced by the letters—by reminders.

—Alejandro, she said to Casandra on one of her visits, always writes to me, and sends me little things. His letters remind of those happy days, when you and he used to come here. I'm so happy he's never forgotten me.

At this, Casandra, sickened at last, flashed out:

—How can you go on talking like that? The pair of you are like a couple of disparate lovers!

But after some three more years, the surrogate son of doña Inés took a new mother-in-law. Casandra at once sent the news to her father.

Guimera was pleased. —Now, he said to his wife, Alejandro's married again. You can stop all this damned tomfoolery.

—What tomfoolery? said his wife obstinately.

—What do you think I mean? All this nonsense about Alejandro, of course. He's been your son-in-law for six years longer than he should have been; now he's someone else's.

The old woman's reaction astonished him.

—I refuse to believe what you have told me, she said calmly.

—You refuse to believe it! You mean you're not going to recognize your true son-in-law?

—I just don't believe it; that's all.

—But you've read Casandra's letter!

Compressing her lips, she muttered stubbornly:

—It makes no difference; Alejandro has told me nothing of all this.

Guimera shouted:

—Pucha! You mean you don't believe your own daughter!

Quavering, but determined, she answered:

—It's all ridiculous tittle-tattle. I won't believe any of it—not until I hear from Alejandro himself.

At this, Guimera stormed out of the room. He was angry not only with his wife, but at the difficulty of disproving her. The little pueblo in which they lived, hundreds of miles from the capital, was just an island in an ocean of grass. Most of the inhabitants did not even know the name of the President.

For the moment he could do nothing more.

However, one thing eventually became certain, something even doña Inés could not deny: the letters from Alejandro ceased.

There came and went about two more years, before Casandra learned that her first husband had been given a minor post on a naval mission to London, that he had taken his wife, who had presented him there with a son.

She wrote to her father, who lost no time in passing the news to doña Inés.

—Now, he said with heavy satisfaction, you should be convinced, woman, and perhaps we can see an end to this whole stupid business.

This time to his anger was added astonishment: his wife refused to accept the report as genuine. —Alejandro, she said stubbornly, would have written and told me, if it had been true.

Guimera exploded. —If I know anything about Alejandro, that's the last thing he would have done. In any case he hasn't written to you for two years now. Why the devil does he have to write and tell you everything?

Mechanically she repeated:

—Alejandro would have written and told me this himself.

—Alejandro! A la mierda with Alejandro! shouted the old man in a rage. He doesn't even belong to this family any more. Don't you realize that? He belongs to *another* family!

As he thought, this roused her.

—It's lies, all lies! she cried. You're all conspiring to deceive me. But you won't succeed. Alejandro and Casandra are man and wife; they were married in the church. Nothing can alter that.

Had she been well, Guimera (who had little time for the church) would have beaten her. But in the last two years she had been ailing from a strange malady, whose nature remained unknown, principally because Guimera believed hospitals to be a waste of time and money. As a concession, he allowed the local doctor to visit her, because he flattered her, made her feel important—something he himself never did.

But the pain had become so insupportable, that finally he consented—mainly owing to pressure from Casandra—to send his wife to the hospital at Santa Teresa, the capital of the province, some 150 miles distant.

The doctors had pronounced an immediate operation imperative.

Afterwards, refusing her husband's surprising offer to let her stay at the hospital to convalesce, she insisted on returning home, where for most of the day she lay in bed.

It was in this vulnerable position that her daughter found her on her next visit.

Casandra this time came provided, having obtained through her own private channels a copy of the diplomatic magazine, in which appeared a photograph of Alejandro, his new wife and, large as life, the newly christened baby in the arms of the republic's London ambassador.

—Now, mama, you are the only person in the world who does not believe the truth.

She then left her mother's room, without another word. By this time she knew her mother's character. She was not surprised, then, a few days after this brief conversation, to hear the old woman say:

—Bueno, hija, show me a photograph of el otro the next time you come to see me.

Casandra, who had kept one ready for several years, brought it out, placed it suddenly in her mother's hand. Startled, the old woman gazed at it for some moments. Her lips turned down slightly.

—M-m-mmm, she said. Nowhere near as handsome as Alejandro. . . . Well, I'll receive him. You can bring him, when you like.

The object of these deliberations, however, had by this time lost his interest, which was replaced by idle curiosity.

It would be nice, he thought, if the old girl would take to me, and I to her—though nobody seems to have considered that—but if not, then: what the hell?

He was, he reflected, nearly forty, had lost even his dislike of 'in-laws', as for him they were odiously named. It had become with him a question of liking people, or not—simpler. Old Guimera he treated as an equal, not as a father-in-law—such a conception indeed had for him something of the ridiculous—; and he said 'tu' to him because he conceived of the relationship as one of friendship, nothing more, and nothing less.

As for doña Inés (and that companion housekeeper he knew she had, Lucía) —they could think what they liked.

Yet he was left with curiosity as to what would happen, when at last the old woman and he confronted one another. For he could not quite believe in the change. People of that age, he thought, did not change fundamental beliefs from one day to the next: if anything, they hardened in their matrices. He found it even more difficult to believe that she could have undone her Spanish —and part Indian?—pride (to say nothing of the dictates of her religion). He

had not forgotten Casandra telling him how her mother's brother, as a young man, suffering from gangrene, had, on learning that the transfusions had completely changed his blood, torn off his dressings, preferring to bleed to death.

Evidently, then, it went deeper than the blood.

II

They took the ancient steamboat from the capital up the immense river, for a day and a night winding slowly among the forests loud with the cries of hidden birds, until on the second morning they found old Guimera with his 1929 Ford awaiting them on the little jetty.

For the whole of the voracious summer day they drove along the earth road over the wide savanna. Dust, entering everything, took the place of air; their lungs rasped with it. The sun, when they got out to snatch a hasty meal in a wayside bolishe, punched them savagely about the head and neck, before they reeled into the comparative shelter of thatched roof and mud walls.

After they had eaten, Raymond, slumped in the back seat, sleepy from wine, looked from time to time from under the palm hat tilted over his eyes at the powerful neck of Guimera and at Casandra's black head of hair. And she is the daughter of that old bull, he thought. Some of him in her, too. But it was astonishing how beautiful the women in South America were. You passed one after another. And between her and himself, he wondered, what had brought it all about? Collision of Anglo-Saxon and Latin-American blood? Each dragging the other into its own stream? More than that, was there not perhaps in the two of them some affinity, transcending national characteristics, something, not ethnological, but psychological?

He could not think further; it was impossible to think anything in that crushing heat. He went to sleep.

It was late afternoon when he awoke, to find the light beginning its slow transmutations from white to pale yellow. They had arrived at the edge of the cañada, the depression, into which had flowed the accumulated heat of every hour since sunrise. The shock, as they hit it, rendered them speechless—until the old man growled:

—Puta! Qué calor de mierda.

Raymond, peering through the flap of the hood at his wife's birthplace, took in an elementary piece of geometry: a square of some seven blocks of flat-roofed, white houses by seven, punctured by one hideous church spire,

warped and weaved, as they coasted down the wide main street, by a few ancient Fords and forgotten makes of cars. Not even bad, he thought. Soulless. At the end of the six or seven blocks in either direction the streets struck the savanna; the next thing was the horizon—that lay some twenty miles distant. And that was that.

He leaned forward, touched the old man on the shoulder.

—Guimera, stop at the flower shop, if there is such a thing; I want to buy some flowers for the señora.

Up jerked the old man's big round head in surprise. —Flores! Qué flores? He motioned with his head to a ragged bunch at the back of the rear seat, perhaps the second he had bought for his wife in forty-five years. Give her those, hombre, give her those. . . .

His voice trailed off, uninterested.

—No. I want to buy my own. Drop me off.

Guimera, taking no notice, drove up to the principal house in the tiny plaza, stopped the car. The three of them got out, Casandra going inside the house immediately. Guimera, as he strode into his house, flicked his thumb over his shoulder. —Over there you'll find a flower shop.

Raymond walked away across the street in the direction indicated, not wishing to enter the house with empty hands. Old doña Inés would probably be in bed, but somewhere about would be Lucía, the housekeeper, of whom he had heard so much, once Casandra's nurse, and one or two Indian or mestiza girl servants.

He found the shop, entered, easing his hat, feeling the ring of pressure lift from his forehead. The place was large, comparatively cool, deserted. A few ferns trailed out of their pots, uncertain which way to go, bunches of odourless, stale carnations lolled wretchedly in two cracked vases. Otherwise nothing.

Wiping the heat off his face, he walked round loudly until, becoming impatient, he clapped his hands.

After a moment, there came a scuffling from the back of the shop. Down a long stone passage a woman in hair curlers and an overall and slippers shuffled out to the counter.

—Buenas tardes. Got anything besides these carnations?

For a second or two she stared at him in silence; then:

—Yes. Some nice gladioli.

—Show me them.

She continued staring at him a moment or two longer, then disappeared

again, remaining absent for such a long time that he walked round behind the counter, and sat on a stool.

No doubt they would be wondering in the house what he was doing, why he had not entered straight away. No matter. He had been in the country eight years now, and knew that nothing mattered very much in South America, especially in the heat. They would merely wait, as he was having to wait, as everybody on the entire continent waited.

Eventually he heard again the slop-slop of the woman's slippers, as she shuffled along the stone passage, bearing gladioli, white, pink and scarlet. They looked all right.

—How much are they?

—Fifty pesos.

—Fifty pesos a dozen!

—Yes, she said, catching his tone; they're dear now.

—Why?

Tonelessly she answered:

—Everything is dear now.

—Oh, I see, he said ironically.

—But the white ones are twenty pesos, she added.

—And the carnations?

—Forty.

He had little money; Casandra and he barely scraped along, but—What's it all matter? he thought suddenly.

—Make me up half a dozen gladioli, mixed colours, half a dozen white gladioli, and a dozen carnations.

—Very good.

In the silence that followed she began to work, until eventually curiosity burst from her.

—What are they for? A presentation to somebody?

—Yes, he said, thinking, What the hell d'you think they're for?

But after a moment his thoughts compelled him to add deliberately:

—For the señora de Guimera.

At that, the woman's eyes opened wide—a cow-like look, he thought.

—La señora de Guimera! Of course! How stupid I am; you are Casandra Guimera's husband. I didn't realize. It must be because you are not wearing your uniform. The last time—

—Make up a nice bunch, will you? A bouquet. You know: paper, ribbon and stuff.

Checked, she regarded him with increasing curiosity. He looked back at her, thinking, You'll get no change out of me.

—Bueno, she said. I'll make up a nice bouquet for the señora; with cellophane and ribbon.

Again she disappeared. Again he sat down on the stool. The shop was silent, the town silent. Through the windows he looked at the wide street, clean, completely deserted at this hour, the windows of every house shuttered, as if an Indian invasion were expected.

Beyond the town the physical horizon was limitless; but the other horizon —how different that would be, he thought: the same as in little towns all over the world, everyone knowing everyone, watching, waiting silently through their long lives, until their end in the hideous cemetery they had passed some five kilometres outside the town. It was a perpetual drama, expanding, unbelievable, its force dominating them all day and night, the only type of intellectual pleasure—all of it compressed into those few crude cubes of brick and plaster and adobe: their theatre.

Now he himself had walked on to their stage, his act already begun; like all the others, helplessly he would make up his lines as he went along.

And the spectators? Already he could hear their whispers at the back of the shop. He got up, went to the door, looked outside.

The white-hot town rose up to meet him. There was no sound save, from the nearby plaza, the squeakings and knife-like rasping of the sparrows; they began to get on his nerves, and silently he cursed the woman for protracting the simple operation. Yet, he thought, for her it was not such a simple operation, but one charged with meaning, vibrant with a special significance, with its place in the town's drama, in which she herself now had a brief walking-on part. Perhaps the excited whispers indicated that they realized he was not Alejandro. He did not know, and fell to wondering how best to treat the old mother. Once more he asked himself what upheaval had occurred inside her—Spanish, Catholic 'to the marrow', as the people phrased it—that she should have changed, allowing him at last entrance to her home? Ought he to treat her gravely, with old-fashioned courtesy? Or, blowing away the musty webs of her provincial inhibitions, to take her by storm, sweep her off her feet?

But it was difficult, if not impossible, to sweep off their feet someone already literally off them, lying in bed most of the day after a terrible operation. Perhaps, then, it were better to make a joke of it all. Perhaps.... He did not know: the whole thing turned meaningless each time he tried to think it out. It was recocida, as they said. Overcooked.

He decided to let things take their course—which is probably what they would do anyway, he reflected ironically. What he liked about Latin-Americans was their refusal to work out elaborate behaviour patterns; they merely allowed things to take their course.

At last the woman reappeared, began making up the flowers. The exact money, which he had got ready, he put down on the counter: seventy-five pesos.

As she arranged the long-stalked gladioli, she looked vacantly at the notes, until he realized she was counting them. Then:

—No. Eighty-five, she said.

—Eighty-five? How is that?

—The cellophane.

—You charge for that?

—Yes. I charge ten pesos for the cellophane and the ribbon.

Ten pesos for that stuff. She must know, then.

Suddenly impatient to be gone, he watched her pin up slowly the simple sheet of cheap cellophane, round which she then tied an orange silk ribbon. Completing the knot, over which she took a long time, she could not find her scissors, and again disappeared behind the partition. He was now prepared to wrench off the ribbon himself, and leave.

She returned, finished the task, took the money; he found himself once more in the empty white street. Unsteadied by the blows of the sun, he arrived at the Guimera house, pushed open the tall door.

It was deathly quiet and dark behind its closed shutters. He crossed a small entrance hall, then a sort of antesala, after which he found himself on a shabby patio of faded green and white mosaic, adorned with a few potted aspidistras. On to this patio opened some five or six doors. One of them was hers. Which?

There was still not a sound but, as he put down his hat on an iron table, Guimera suddenly appeared. Nervous, excited, he took Raymond firmly by the arm, guided him to a pair of tall doors.

—In here, he said brusquely, almost violently. Ahí está la vieja. There's the old woman—in there, in there.

And he shoved the younger man through the doors.

Raymond found himself in a dark room without windows, whose ceiling was lost in obscurity, and in which he could at first see nothing. Then he made out a figure.

Standing in the middle of the room, wearing a sort of bathrobe, white, shape-

less, the figure was turned away from him. Although it must have heard his entrance, it did not look round at him.

Preparing the enormous, crackling bouquet of flowers, he advanced, opening his mouth to say something—he did not know what—whence the figure turned, to face him.

He recoiled. The old woman's face, white as her robe, was the face of a waxwork image, the eyes alone alive, glowing like coal-black jewels.

Alone, in silence they stood thus, facing each other for a space of time outside measurement, until he said jocularly:

—You see! The flower seller has arrived!

And he held out the huge sheaf, the cellophane crackling noisily in the room.

She kept her hands to herself, remaining silent, and again time ceased. Then her lips began to tremble, as she formed words.

—Quien es? she whispered. Who are you?

Her words rustled the silence, and to him she appeared tense, coiled, reminding him of a snake in the second before it lunges. He was tense himself, as they regarded each other in the dusky silence. For he knew now that she knew him.

They remained thus, looking at each other, when the door flew open, Casandra entered, saw them face to face, cried:

—Mama! Don't you know who this is?

Her mother made no move. Her lips working again, her bright, living eyes staring out of her waxen face of death, she whispered:

—No, daughter. How should I know? Who is he?

—But it's Raimundo, of course. Who else?

Without expression she whispered:

—Raimundo?

—My husband.

—Oh.

—He's come to see you. Look! He's brought you some beautiful flowers.

Doña Inés made no move, nor did she take her eyes from the man who had come to see her.

—Oh, it's him then, is it? I didn't know.

—But mama!

—I didn't know, child. You never told me.

To this Casandra answered nothing.

All at once the old woman's voice changed, quavered childishly.

—He said he was the flower seller, you see. Why didn't he tell me?

Casandra turned to her husband, who had not moved a muscle during this charade.

—Go on. Aren't you going to kiss my mamita?

Not allowing himself to think, he took a swift pace forward, placed his lips to the old woman's cheek, felt no reciprocal salute on his own, thought:

Alabaster—only colder, harder.

And he gave her the flowers.

In the evening the heat ebbed a little. A huge setting sun and a round, ripe summer moon, white as though with its own heat, glared at each other from opposite quadrants; from the little plaza a heady perfume from the jacarandás and magnolias stole into the house. Casandra, entering again the bedroom in which she had slept as a child, thought: For me to return here is like entering a vacuum. Here I don't think at all. I don't believe anybody has ever thought anything in this house. People have just eaten and slept here, made love, and died—thinking nothing the whole of their lives.

She heard her father's bellow from the patio:

—Casandra! Come and have a vermouth.

—In a minute, papa.

—Raimundo! shouted the old man to his guest, less than a yard from him. Have a glass of vermouth.

—Thanks, said the other, pushing his glass over the iron table.

The old man clumsily splashed in vermouth, until the tumbler was almost full. —Here, he said in a voice that shook the house; put some bitters in. Go on, go on. Metele, metele. Put some soda in too, hombre.

He might have been shouting above the roar of a shipyard.

Raymond shook in some Fernet-Branca, and the old man, seizing the soda syphon, squirted a fierce jet into the glass, which promptly overflowed; he ignored Raymond's repeated 'basta, basta'.

Raymond, raising his head to drink, saw in the shadows of the passage to the back of the house the figures of three women, knew them for Lucía, the housekeeper, and the two servant girls. Leaning against the wall, whispering among themselves, they were watching his every movement, weighing his every word—his unrehearsed lines. They would miss nothing, remember everything, including things that had never happened. For them, he knew, he was a copy of a proof sheet printed long ago on the dark presses of their provincial minds.

Suddenly Guimera, scraping his chair harshly over the patio floor, got to his feet, marched away, head down like a bull, to return carrying an enormous slice of cheese, shouting:

—Here, Raimundo! Have some of this, man.

Grabbing his chair as though it would escape him, he sat down noisily, gazed lengthily at the husband of his daughter, as a child regards an animal seen for the first time.

Soon, however, he became restless again, got up once more, to disappear in another direction. When he returned, he carried a large bag of walnuts. With a huge hunting knife he began to pulverize them, shoving the shattered mass of shells and nuts across the table to Raymond. Noisily he began to eat the nuts and take his vermouth. After a few moments, he bellowed:

—Lucía! The food, bring the food.

—Papa! said Casandra, entering the patio from her room, must you make such a din?

She crossed the patio, entering her mother's room. —Mama, we're just going to start supper.

Her mother looked at her, saying nothing; she was sitting on the edge of her bed, regarding a spot on the floor.

—What is the matter, mama? Aren't you going to come and eat with us?

The old woman shook her head.

—But you've been all right today, mama.

—Not now, whispered her mother. I don't feel so well now. I'll have a little something in my room, perhaps.

—Come out for a little while, then.

—No, I'm not well enough to eat with all of you.

Casandra thought she understood.

—Raymond will be disappointed, she said.

—I'm sorry, said the old woman immediately; but I shall have to stay in my room. Besides—she added irrelevantly—Horacio is coming tonight.

—Horacio?

—Yes. My doctor, said the other possessively of the only doctor within about 130 miles.

—Oh yes, of course, said Casandra, who had a poor opinion of him.

Knowing there was nothing more to be said, she went out, leaving the tall doors just ajar, and took her place at the table now set on the patio. Maruja, one of the mestiza girls, waited on them, and Lucía officiated for her mistress. Raymond, watching her serve the food, found her lean, stork-like, shrivelled—

by a lifetime of waiting? he wondered, looking in that instant at Guimera.

The old man, now shirtsleeved, head bent so low over the table that he appeared to have no neck, was eating at an incredible speed, not removing his eyes once from his plate. To the accompaniment of most of a litre of red wine, he wolfed a dish of partridges in escabeche sauce, a large steak, roasted intestines and bull's testicles, before uttering a word.

At last, wiping the lower part of his face on the table-cloth, he turned his attention to Raymond, whom he plied with every sort of drink: white wine, white beer, black beer, all in addition to the red wine the younger man was drinking. Finally, believing the other dissatisfied, he shouted to the other girl to bring a bottle of Gamba de Pernice.

—Dios mio! sighed Casandra, recalling past experiences with the powerful sparkling wine; that's going to split everyone's heads before morning.

Guimera, however, was not to be stopped. —Maruja! he shouted to the girl only a yard away from him: More glasses!

Although the sun had gone, the heat remained, as after an oven has been turned off; the wine was warm. Raymond put down his glass, not wishing to drink more. But Guimera pressed.

—Do you want some ice, Raimundo?

—No, thanks.

—Try some beer then; it's cold.

—No, thanks.

The old man at that moment appeared to be watching over him as though over a long-lost son. He was also trying to make him a little drunk.

For a while they ate in silence. Raymond's eyes every now and then rested on the tall doors behind which the old woman lay. Not a sound issued from her room which, windowless, was already in darkness. He did not ask himself what her thoughts might be: he was, he realized, the only one in the house besides herself who knew.

The Gamba de Pernice was brought and served; but Guimera, watching Raymond, appeared troubled. Suddenly, as if as the result of a difficult decision, he banged down his glass on the table, got up so violently that his chair fell over with a crash. No one took any notice nor even touched the chair.

He went to the kitchen, where, ignoring the other girl, he opened the refrigerator, wrenching out, after a tussle, a tray of ice. Taking it to the sink, he began to beat it furiously against the wall.

For a while the others listened to his oaths. Raymond, feeling for some

reason his liking of the old man sharpen, began to smile. The din increased, until Lucía called out:

—Don Alonso! You'll not get it out that way. Put it under the tap.

And Casandra, distraught at this exhibition in front of her second husband, cried:

—*Papa*!

The old man now put the ice-tray under the tap, and soon had succeeded in splashing water all over the kitchen floor. Finally, dislodging several chunks of ice, he returned to the table, held out triumphantly the tray to Raymond, who looked up with surprise.

—Here you have ice! said Guimera, elated.

—But, papa! said Casandra; Raimundo said he didn't want any ice.

Disillusioned, Guimera turned again to Raymond.

—You don't want any ice, then?

—No, thanks.

Resignedly, Casandra said:

—Papa, put the ice back in the refrigerator.

But Guimera, picking up his chair, reseated himself, began clumsily hacking at the ice-blocks, finally shouted to Raymond:

—Here, Raimundo, have some ice, man. Here!

And with a series of crashes dropped four or five lumps into the other's glass, which was empty.

Raymond looked at his glass; laughter tempted him. Then, without knowing why, he looked again at the doors of doña Inés's room. All through this burletta, he thought, she has made no sound. Then he felt Lucía's bright bird's eyes on him—like a watching bird, he thought, waiting for the food it dares not take.

She cleared her throat. Something told him that a blow, albeit a puny one, was coming; but from what quarter or how he could not tell.

In her piping voice she began to relate.

—The day we brought the señora back from the hospital in Santa Teresa, there was a procession in Cañada de López—for the Virgen de Fátima. The whole town turned out, even the Indians and the poor people from across the arroyo. Never in my life have I seen so many people in Cañada.

—Yes,—interposed Casandra—and when everyone was in the plaza, outside the church, the priest cried: Three cheers for the Virgen de Fátima! But all he got in reply was a miserable wail. So then he shouted—she gave an ironical imitation of the priest, rolling her r's—Más fuerte, mis hijos, que la Virgen oiga sus fieles de Cañada de López! (Louder, my children, so the Virgin

can hear her faithful of Cañada de López!)

Casandra's city years had sophisticated her. The spectacle of the faithful of Cañada de López being exhorted to shout louder, so that the Virgin could hear them, was for her amusing—also for her husband, who burst into laughter.

And old Guimera, now carving himself huge portions of cheese and quince marmalade, permitted a malicious smile to spread over his face.

Lucía, however, unamused by the interruption, waited until the laughter had died: she had not said all she wanted.

—Yes, she continued, and something else was happening that day. Only one square away from the procession of the Virgin there was another gathering. —She paused to make sure of her audience. —And this other gathering was for another Virgin!

She stopped dramatically.

—Puta, what virgin? growled the old man, his mouth full.

—A virgin of another religion! she said, her voice rising an octave.

—Yes, but what religion, woman?

Lucía's voice sharpened with scorn. —Another religion, in which they don't pray and confess, as we do. And the men—she hissed the words—*kiss each other*!

There was a moment's silence, then Guimera growled:

—Qué boludez! (What balls!)

And he rose brusquely, to disappear into one of the dark rooms opening on to the patio.

Triumphantly now Lucía continued, pressing together her thin lips which, thought Raymond, had never known the tenderness of a lover's mouth.

—Yes! she cried, approaching her finale. Another religion!

Then, raising her voice still higher, in contemptuous emphasis and lancing her piercing bird's glance straight at Raymond, she delivered her thrust!

—Yes, *protestants* there were. Protestants!

So that's what it's all about, thought Raymond. At last you've got it off your chest. And I know just what you mean, you old starved crow; but they're all the same to me—Protestants, Catholics, Jews, the lot.

At that moment from the room Guimera had entered came the crash of collapsing furniture, and the tail of the old man's standard oath:

—'to que lo parió.

Loudly Casandra sighed.

—My god, whatever is he up to now?

—Getting my bed ready, said Lucía complacently.

—Where's he going to put it?

—In your mama's room. I'm going to sleep with her tonight.

And the two of you, Raymond thought, will have plenty to gas about all night.

For a few moments there was calm. The patio, which was slowly being involved in the short summer darkness, suddenly brightened. Raymond, lifting his head, saw, sliding down one wall, moonlight, ghost-coloured, the same colour, he thought, as the old woman's face. Then Guimera's roar fragmentized the short silence.

—Isobel!

From the kitchen, also looking on to the patio, came the answering slither of naked feet.

—Light the lamps, girl!

He emerged from the room, carrying a collapsible bed, shouting at no one in particular:

—Hey! I'll get Raimundo a spittoon, in case he should need one during the night.

Stacking the bed noisily outside doña Inés's door, he blundered away somewhere, then, remembering it was dark, shouted:

—Listen! I'll get a torch, so Raimundo can see, in case he wants to go to the bathroom in the night.

But, after turning everything upside down, he was unable to find the torch and yelled:

—Casandra!

—Yes, papa. What *is* it?

—Tell Raimundo I can't find the torch, he said momentously. If he's taken short in the night, he can do it out of the window on to the street.

Raymond, feeling the wine and food expand inside him, lit a long cigar; he was beginning to enjoy himself.

The dark-skinned girl slithered in, bearing the oil lamp. From the lowered wick the yellow light welled out to engage the shadows advancing from the edge of the patio and the blacker shadows round the sick woman's door. Still she did not request a light.

Suddenly the front door bell jangled.

—Adelante! shouted Guimera at the top of his voice, reseating himself at the table. Some fruit! he added to one of the girls.

But the visitor, who apparently knew the house, had already entered. On to the patio he strode, the family doctor, the town doctor, the only doctor

within 130 miles—shirt-sleeved, cigar in mouth, carrying a little black bag. He had grey wavy hair, grey moustache to match, and was the type, thought Raymond, who thinks himself irresistible to women, and probably is—to many fool enough not to see through him.

The doctor, putting his bag on the dinner table, entered at once into conversation with Guimera, his almost every sentence being rounded off with a proverb, a saying, a judgement.

Casandra regarded him with disgust. He was, she knew, something of a politiquero, a bit of a tub-thumper, and had thus for her a certain entertainment value; beyond that—nothing. She knew, too, that he was going with an Indian girl from across the arroyo, and that the welt on his forehead evidenced his wife's recognition of it. She got up, went to her mother, whom she found seated on the bed in darkness, doing nothing.

—Mama, don't you want a light—sitting in the dark like that?

—I don't mind the dark, my child, said her mother, without moving.

—The doctor's here.

—Ah! My doctor. Don't let him come in yet; I want to get myself ready. Open the door, just a little, and let some light in. Not too much.

Casandra obeyed, looked at her mother curiously in the faint light entering from the patio.

—Mama, why do you like him so much?

—Who?

—The doctor.

—Why? Porque me gusta, replied the old woman illogically.

—Yes, but he's useless as a doctor, you know that.

—Maybe, but I like him, repeated her mother petulantly, driven into a corner.

She began to arrange her hair, then coyly added:

—You know why I like him, Casandra?

—Why?

In a pathetic tone, she said:

—Porque me tiene lástima. He has pity for me.

Casandra returned to the patio, not knowing what to think, hurt to see her mother wasting feelings on a man she herself knew to be no good. Yet where else, she wondered, watching her father jerk the fruit bowl towards him, is she to get sympathy? The story of this household.

The doctor was now deep in his peroration, which concerned, as usual, his speciality: the decline and fall of the republic. He remained standing—prob-

ably because of his subject, thought Casandra derisively.

—Now, take patriotism, he was saying in a silky, persuasive voice. If we in this country had only *that* much—he showed the extreme tip of his little finger-nail—why then we could make this country really great.

He paused. No one commented. Guimera, the only one whose face was illuminated by the still down-turned lamp, looked a little glazed.

—But you know something? the doctor continued. With the English and the Germans—his tone became contemptuous—patriotism is a very different thing.

He broke off, looked at Guimera, who had demolished half the fruit, seeming to be taking little or no notice.

—Yes, he continued, wrinkling his moustache; with the English and the Germans, patriotism is exaggerated: they let themselves be *killed* for their countries!

He stopped abruptly, struck an attitude. The others watched him with indifferent curiosity, saying nothing. Then in Guimera's eyes appeared a malicious glint. He grabbed another handful of apricots from the bowl, looked furtively from the doctor to Raymond, from Raymond to the doctor, then, leaning forward, turned up the lamp to full brilliancy. At the same time he moved it; the light bounded into Raymond's face.

At once the doctor saw the new face, which appeared thus to have materialized out of the shadows. He ceased ranting, cried:

—Ah! Qué tal, qué tal? I never recognized you there in the dark. What a surprise. Such a long time. What do you tell me of your life?

Raymond, content after his meal, looked at the doctor through a cloud of cigar smoke, and said nothing.

The doctor then looked at him more closely, trying to make up his mind. At length:

—Do you know, I find you a bit thinner than when you last came.

And moving a little round the table, he clasped affectionately his hand round the other's neck.

There was utter silence. Raymond was aware that Casandra had stopped eating, that Lucía's bright bird glance was cocked triumphantly at himself, that in the passage shadows moved—and that one of the lofty doors of doña Inés's room had swung silently open. The tall oblong of blackness thus disclosed became partly filled in with a blurred white form. Unmoving, the form waited. Trembling against his reply? he wondered.

Everyone, everything waited; even the moonlight, it seemed, had ceased

spilling itself down the patio wall. He twisted in his chair, smiled up at the man he had never seen in his life.

—Yes, he said casually, I have lost a bit since then.

He ran his eye up and down the figure of the doctor; the others held their breath.

—But you, he added; I do believe you've gone the other way. You're a little fatter, if I'm not mistaken.

A gasp came from Lucía. From Guimera a choking sound. Raymond, turning his head quickly, caught him off his guard.

The old man was half sprawled across the table, noisily, too noisily expectorating apricot stones, his head bent right over his plate. But in his eyes, peering up through his bushy brows and fixed on the doctor, lights were dancing, spangles of deep, hidden laughter, irrepressible, malicious, playing back the younger man's thoughts—a laugh which for the second husband outbalanced everything, since the day he had taken Casandra.

The old man and the younger understood each other.

New Poems-1963

In the autumn of 1962 the tenth P.E.N. anthology of contemporary poetry will appear, edited by Patricia Beer, Ted Hughes and Vernon Scannell.

The *eleventh* volume of this series, NEW POEMS – 1963, will see a change of policy, for instead of the trio of editors there will be one single editor, *Lawrence Durrell.* Poets are invited to submit work for his consideration to: The Editor, New Poems – 1963, P.E.N., 62 Glebe Place, London, S.W.3.

Not more than *two* poems should be sent by each poet, and all manuscripts should be submitted with a stamped addressed envelope for their return (those wishing their poems to be acknowledged should *also* enclose a stamped addressed postcard).

Poems which have appeared in book form cannot be accepted, though work broadcast or published in periodicals during 1961 is eligible. Payment will be made for all poems accepted for inclusion in NEW POEMS – 1963, which will be published by Hutchinson of London in the autumn of 1963.

The closing date for entries is March 1, 1962, and a decision as to acceptance or non-acceptance should not be expected for some months.

Three Poems

AN ORDERED SABBATH

Six days lean on Sunday like a sullen reprimand:
the wind that waves the family in brings
only some epithet from me, such as: now I'll
get to church looking like a sodding golliwog!

When my wife kneels as we enter, I imagine her mind
folded in like the pistil of a tulip. I kneel too
but can only say: Well, since I'm here, for Christ's
sake *do* something with me—hoping that I have not

taken the name in vain. I compose my face, arrange
my hands and knees in all appropriate gestures, bow
when others bow and follow like a coward to the altar rail.
Five years ago in Alton I knelt with two dozen monks

and felt myself involved. Now I wail to myself like
an Old Testament hero prophesying doom. The excuse
I make for going is the children, and I wait
until they're out of hearing before I tell my wife

that my aftermath is like a pocket of green bile; she
eats her egg and bacon sadly. At one o'clock I'll take her
to the pub and roar in my own element; at three,
if the kids are out, I'll whip her into bed.

Six days lean on Sunday like a sullen reprimand and
when Sunday comes round I break out into loneliness—
like the tree we often point to in the park
that sheds its leaves in the early days of spring.

A PROPOSAL

Blame it, then, on last night's beer:
my loud breakfast-voice alarming
fear in a small boy's eyes. Nothing
surprises, but the voice enlarged and
rising like an early-morning wail.

Later, I'll carry that pale face
around my person, shell-framed in regret
and looking like an icon I have broken.

Now that it's too late, I see the hard lines
I have scratched upon another person's God.
Nothing I can do will change a thing.

Tonight I'll buy a bar of chocolate that
is too expensive and too cheap by far.
Tomorrow another battle will begin.

Dear God, accepting that you cannot win
without my intervention, can't we, as
fathers, settle for a non-aggression pact?

EASTER MONDAY

An enormous chocolate egg surrounds the day,
its pieces cheap and gritty to the teeth; we look out
through cellophane, company with the yellow cotton chicks.

Outside, it rains: we see the splashes covering the sky,
hear it swish on an indian file of motor cars which climbs the hill.

Nothing happens. Football games are played by a man on wireless;
the yellow cotton chicks will not keep still, but deafen us with cheeping.

Tomorrow the egg will be eaten, the chicks laid dead in a pile
of paper straw. In another year the tomb will have been found
empty, and we will be back home again with rain and yellow cotton chicks.

The Human Image in Yeats

Reading Yeats we find a poet intensely and often painfully preoccupied with the irreconcilable claims of Soul and Body: 'body and soul/Estranged amid the strangeness of themselves'. Intensely and painfully, because being a poet he was driven toward images of 'wholeness', unity, and 'perfection'. There seemed no possibility of realizing 'Unity of Being'; the poetic metaphor was frustrate at every point. In 'King and No King' he had written:

And I that have not your faith, how shall I know
That in the blinding light beyond the grave,
We'll find so good a thing as that we have lost?
The hourly kindness, the day's common speech,
The habitual content of each with each
When neither soul nor body has been crossed.

There were many moments in which Yeats thought—or hoped against hope—that everything would be fulfilled in the accords of a distinguished human body; that the body, in splendid animation, would certify an undissociated unity of being, like the transfiguration which Ribh conjured at the tomb of Baile and Aillinn. But again he would find the body a dissociated and dying animal.

This is Yeats as patient. As agent he sought to heal himself: first, by lamenting the lost harmony, invoking a great-rooted chestnut tree that suffered from none of man's dissociations. And again: with a dramatist's instinct he broke down the crux into its two great conflicting parts; thereafter interpreting experience, as his 'condition' prodded, now in terms of Soul (or Spirit), now in terms of Body (or Nature). The crux was a complex and unmanageable simultaneity: Yeats replaced it, imperatively, by a more tolerable scheme of successiveness. He resolved a contradictory 'yes-no' situation by setting up a plot that developed from 'yes' to 'no' and *vice versa*.[1]

[1] Cf. Kenneth Burke: 'Mysticism as a Solution of the Poet's Dilemma': in *Spiritual Problems in Contemporary Literature*, edited by Stanley Romaine Hopper (New York: Harper, 1952).

In *The Wanderings of Oisin, Crossways, The Rose* and *The Wind among the Reeds*, Yeats located the Spirit in a realm of picturesque sorrow with 'numberless islands', 'many a Danaan shore', and a 'woven world-forgotten isle'. In those books whatever mode of existence is identified with the Spirit is protected, in tenderness, from the critique of Body or Nature. Those early poems are a long and intermittently beautiful 'yes' to the Spirit; but the Spirit is abused, maimed, because torn from the Body. In later years and with different materials Yeats often said 'yes' to the Spirit; under the guise of Mind, for instance, as in 'All Souls' Night':

Such thought—such thought have I that hold it tight
Till meditation master all its parts,
Nothing can stay my glance
Until that glance run in the world's despite
To where the damned have howled away their hearts,
And where the blessed dance:
Such thought, that in it bound
I need no other thing,
Wound in mind's wandering
As mummies in the mummy-cloth are wound.

In this poem Yeats praises those adepts who, like Florence Emery, meditate upon unknown thought and repudiate the Body:

What matter who it be,
So that his elements have grown so fine
The fume of muscatel
Can give his sharpened palate ecstasy
No living man can drink from the whole wine.

Ours are 'gross palates'.

This is one situation, one act in the plot. Its counterpart is the Crazy Jane series in *Words for Music Perhaps*.

The year is 1929. Yeats is recovering from an attack of Maltese fever. Behind him, or so he fancies, are the world of politics, the Irish Senate, and 'a sixty-year-old smiling public man'. He writes to Olivia Shakespear from Rapallo: 'No more opinions, no more politics, no more practical tasks.' Joyful riddance: it is a prosperous moment. Sixty-four years old, Yeats feels new

strength and sexual energy returning to his body. He is impelled to have recourse to that 'nature' (in bodily terms) from which he had withdrawn, estranged, to a more gracious world of pure Mind. Now he withdraws again, provisionally, not only from pure Mind but from a 'practical' *scene* of disillusion. Ridding himself of a 'practical' world he reduces his scene accordingly: he identifies his will, provisionally, with the urges of the body in revolt, giving it—for protection and definition—the name 'Crazy Jane'.

It is a simplification on Yeats's part, and therefore an evasion. Indeed, each of Yeats's books of poems is a strategic simplification, a trial account of his universe devoted not to the entire complex truth but to a particular bias which is dominant for the time being. Some are phoenix books; others turtle books; what one longs for is the mutual flame:

Hearts remote, yet not asunder;
Distance, and no space was seen.

In the Crazy Jane poems Yeats for the time being places as much trust in the bodily (a turtle, surely) as Racine in the greatly passionate, or Wordsworth in the greatly sensitive. The bodily imperative is the 'myth' of the Crazy Jane poems, corresponding to the anthropological myth of 'The Waste Land'.

Words for Music Perhaps: the words are for music, not because they are to be sung, but because their burden, like that of the ballad, belongs to the folk. The context of the book is that quantity of folk-experience which has 'the body's potencies'—Lawrence's phrase—as its prime motive.

The connotations are important. It is 'that foul body' in 'Those Dancing Days are Gone', but this does not mean—as a recent critic maintains—that Yeats 'identifies the physical, corporeal aspects of love with that which is *foul*', or that in his later poems, going one better, he 'regards the sexual act as mostly beastly'. Quite the opposite. There is a curious tonality in those Crazy Jane poems:

Come, let me sing into your ear;
Those dancing days are gone,
All that silk and satin gear;
Crouch upon a stone,
Wrapping that foul body up
In as foul a rag:

The body is not foul. What is foul—here—is its decay, its loss of power, mainly sexual ('the vigour of its blood'). Six days before writing this poem Yeats had rendered that bodily power in 'Crazy Jane Grown Old Looks at the Dancers':

God be with the times when I
Cared not a thraneen for what chanced
So that I had the limbs to try
Such a dance as there was danced—
Love is like the lion's tooth.

Again in 'Mad as the Mist and Snow' the winds are foul because they testify to decay. In 'All Souls' Night' the years are foul because they wear away Florence Emery's beauty. Indeed, Yeats uses the word when he has in mind sheer mutability. The trickiest case is 'Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop':

I met the Bishop on the road
And much said he and I.
'Those breasts are flat and fallen now,
Those veins must soon be dry;
Live in a heavenly mansion,
Not in some foul stye.'

The choice is offered as if it were unanswerable; the Bishop, as rhetorician, has no time for the Gidean problematic. Here, of course, 'foul' is censorial, and we expect the Bishop to be whipped for his cliché. Crazy Jane accepts the word and its challenge:

'Fair and foul are near of kin,
And fair needs foul,' I cried.

There is also, she claims, the God of Love; and He has rights, a trim decorum, and His own special mansion. And the term He proffers—since two can play the rhetorical game—have a sanction prior to that of the Bishop's God, because they are certified by the axioms of the body and by 'the heart's pride':

A woman can be proud and stiff
When on love intent;

But Love has pitched his mansion in
The place of excrement;
For nothing can be sole or whole
That has not been rent.

A devotee of Blake, she has the last word.

She has the first word in 'Crazy Jane on the Day of Judgement', and here her interpretation of love has a wider circumference than usual. Indeed the Crazy Jane of this poem encompasses the three great dramatic rôles through which, as Richard Ellmann has observed, Yeats voiced his conceptions. First, she is the Seer:

'Love is all
Unsatisfied
That cannot take the whole
Body and soul';

The Victim:

'Naked I lay,
The grass my bed;
Naked and hidden away,
That black day';

Finally, the Assessor:

'What can be shown?
What true love be?
All could be known or shown
If Time were but gone.'

The poem is intensely moving because it is willing to test the possibilities of growth and extension in a conception of love based on the bodily imperative. Crazy Jane's speculations do not go very far, and anything like an Incarnational view of the body is as far removed from her as from Yeats himself at any point; but in this poem there is an urge to face radical questions which are often evaded in *Words for Music Perhaps*. This book is devoted to a partial view of things: Crazy Jane has a deeper idea of love than Jack the

Journeyman, but she is less urgently engaged in refining this idea than in knocking down Aunt Sally's like the Bishop. In the later 'Supernatural Songs' Ribh plays a similar rôle; not so much enacting the whole as insisting upon the part which, he asserts, the Christian view discards; 'the phallic consciousness', again Lawrence's phrase:

Natural and supernatural with the self-same ring are wed.
As man, as beast, as an ephemeral fly begets, Godhead begets Godhead,
For things below are copies, the Great Smaragdine Tablet said.

Crazy Jane and Ribh are propagandists, speaking half-truths by vocation. They may be more humanely 'right' than the Bishop, but they are just as severely dissociated as he, and the poetic metaphor is just as far beyond their grasp. If the speaker in 'All Souls' Night' is a Paleface, Crazy Jane and Ribh are Redskins—to use Philip Rahv's famous terms; countering the 'sensibility' of *The Tower* with their own 'experience'. But the experience is raw, and therefore equally vulnerable to irony.

Yeats wanted his 'Poems for Music' to be 'all emotion and all impersonal'. On March 2, 1929—the day on which he wrote 'Crazy Jane and the Bishop' and 'Crazy Jane Grown Old Looks at the Dancers'—he referred to the poems: 'They are the opposite of my recent work and all praise of joyous life, though in the best of them it is a dry bone on the shore that sings the praise.' Joyous life in this book is life in which the prime commitment is to the body. Everything else may change or be dissolved, but not that.

Until now we have been discussing the book as Yeats's 'self-expression'. But it is necessary to add another context, involving the persuasive relation between the poet and his audience.

Reading Yeats we find a poet who 'believed in' none of the public, institutional faiths. But he needed their authority, their momentum, or at least authority and momentum from similar sources. And he was a spectacular opportunist. So he used each of the public faiths whenever he felt that one of its patterns of insight was specially relevant to the feeling in hand. He may have been drawn to these local 'allegiances' by sensing a purely formal congruity between the pattern in the 'public' structure and the pattern implicit in the private feeling. This would account for the Way of the Cross in 'The Travail of Passion', to certify feeling akin to its own; or the figure of the Guardian Angel in 'A Prayer for My Son'. Similarly in the Crazy Jane poems the bodily imperative is a 'public' pattern of experience, with the force of

public authority, complete with dogmas, rites, mysteries—and these by universal assent. The great advantage of the bodily imperative as a source of verbal communication is that it is prior to all conflicts of thought or belief; it undercuts the contentious levels of experience. In lofty moments Yeats would invoke the Great Memory as the source and means of communication, and he would speak beautifully under its sign, but there would always be something problematic in its operation. The human body was more reliable; indeed, the body was the only universal church to which Yeats would belong.

We have described a strategic simplification and called it—harshly—evasion. And we would suggest that a great mind which has recourse to such a strategy must harbour severe misgivings, knowing that it omits so much, condones so much distortion. That is why one has the feeling, reading through the later books, that very often Yeats is adopting certain rôles not to protect himself from tourists but because he rather fancies himself in the parts; like the 'character part' of the lusty old man. A new and distressing kind of picturesque, this leads to a certain hardening of the arteries in such a poem as 'News for the Delphic Oracle'. Here is part of the first stanza:

Man-picker Niamh leant and sighed
By Oisin on the grass;
There sighed amid his choir of love
Tall Pythagoras.

Porphyry's Elysian Fields are very like Yeats's Islands of Forgetfulness, and Yeats—sly old virtuoso—can now jeer at both. With the same virtuosity he can laugh at the equestrian Innocents:

Straddling each a dolphin's back
And steadied by a fin,
Those Innocents re-live their death,
Their wounds open again.

The last word is Yeats's: he offers it, surely, as critique:

Foul goat-head, brutal arm appear,
Belly, shoulder, bum,
Flash fishlike, nymphs and satyrs
Copulate in the foam.

Touché. Yes, but isn't it, itself, in a weak position, despite the bodily imperative and the sophisticated accent? The poem has ended, but one could envisage a fourth stanza (by Dante) in which the Old-Yeatsian heaven of the third would be shown for the vulnerable thing it is. The critique is valid enough as far as it goes, but not valid enough to justify the tone, the shrill exhibitionist mockery. The Yeats of the *Last Poems* did not often laugh in the tragic joy of Lear and Hamlet; his laughter is too shrill for that. (The great humane exception to this rule is of course 'The Circus Animals' Desertion'.)

This shrillness in Yeats's late work issues, I think, from those misgivings which I have mentioned. In *Words for Music Perhaps, A Full Moon in March,* and many of the *Last Poems* Yeats's strategic simplifications placed him in a false position; hence the strident tone.

He soon got tired of Crazy Jane, though, perhaps acknowledging the limited range of her insight. He used her once again, innocuously, cursing puny times and a world bereft of Cuchulains.

Words for Music Perhaps—a final comment before we look at other human images in Yeats—is a valuable book because it enables us to re-enact a movement of feeling downward into the limited, finite *thing*. The movement is touching in itself, in its compulsions and embarrassments; only the most sullen reader could fail to be moved and disturbed by this partial image of the human condition. The pathos of the book is that when Yeats had reached down into the finite Body there was little he could do with it; he saw no means of penetrating the finite without transcending it and thereby destroying it, as Roderick destroyed Madeline, in a rage for essence. The trouble was that he could not value the human body in itself; only when it agreed to wear a bright halo of animation.

It is a painful dialectic. The poet for whom plenitude of being is everything finds himself kicking several of man's faculties out of the way in his rage for essence. The devotee of 'perfection' bows before fragments. In his most perceptive moments he knows that it is a desperate expedient, that even his Byzantine eternity is artifice.

It seems that I must bid the Muse go pack,
Choose Plato and Plotinus for a friend
Until imagination, ear and eye,
Can be content with argument and deal
In abstract things; or be derided by
A sort of battered kettle at the heel.

If you reduce a human being to his consciousness, and then provide a diet of unknown thought, argument, and abstraction, you must face the risks involved; attrition, emaciation, a desert of mummies. Time and again in *The Tower* Yeats prays for a kinder unity: 'O may the moon and sunlight seem/One inextricable beam/For if I triumph I must make men mad.' But that book is a little too engrossed with its own exposure to allow much consideration for other people; apart from a few chosen friends, the rest are given as hot-faced bargainers and money-changers. And what can we say of the monstrous crudity, the sheer vulgarity, of 'Mrs French,/Gifted with so fine an ear'? Grant that Yeats's position was difficult, perhaps impossible. 'All Souls' Night' was written under the sign of body-wearied Plotinus; as in the fourth *Ennead*, the dying animal of 'Sailing to Byzantium' is here dead, a mummy, and the 'soul' moves from its prison of diminished being. But in Yeats it has nowhere to go; the poet could not make anything of Plotinus's belief in the later stages of emanation toward the One. Hence the desperate stratagem, six years later, of Byzantium.

'All Souls' Night' is almost a test case for the hazard of the human image. It is a thrilling poem; we are at once thrilled and shocked to find Yeats driving himself into such a terrifying corner. The position itself—we feel at once— is untenable. It is unnecessarily dissociative. Mind—as the gentle philosopher Philip Wheelwright puts it—'does not stand alone: it exists intentively in relation to objects and it exists dialogically in relation to other selves'.[1] So the intensity of 'All Souls' Night' amounts to this; a stern mind denying the most serviceable relations in a humane life, and holding this denial 'to the end of the line'.

Does this matter? Or is it the fury in the words that matters, and not the words?

The received opinion among readers of Yeats is that the classic poems are in *The Tower* and *The Winding Stair*. And yet by comparison with *The Wild Swans at Coole* the human image in those spectacular books is curiously incomplete; remarkably intense, but marginal; a little off-centre. Does this matter? Yes, it does; intensity is not enough. It matters greatly that *The Wild Swans at Coole* is at the very heart of the human predicament, groping for values through which man may define himself without frenzy or servility.

This book is concerned with the behaviour of man in the cold light of age and approaching death. The ideal stance involves passion, self-conquest, courtesy, and moral responsibility. Yeats pays the tribute of wild tears to

[1] 'The Intellectual Light': *Sewanee Review*, LXVI, 3. Summer, 1958. p. 411.

many personages and to the moral beauty which they embody; the entire book is rammed with moral life. Most of the poems were written between 1915 and 1919, and it is significant that those were the years in which Yeats was perfecting his dance-drama; because the dancer was the culmination of the efforts which Yeats made in *The Wild Swans at Coole* to represent the fullness of being as a dynamic action. In 'The Double Vision of Michael Robartes' the girl who dances between the Sphinx and the Buddha dreams of dancing and has outdanced thought; which I take to mean that in her Action is not distinct from Vision but is Vision itself formulated. The moral equivalent of this is a certain nonchalance or recklessness, Castiglione's *sprezzatura*, a certain high daring; mastery, rather than singularity, to cite Valéry's distinction. As we gloss we may quote a few sentences from Buber's meditations upon Nijinsky:

'The decisive power in the development of the dance was neither play nor expression, but what bound them both and gave them law: magic. That is the response to the chaotic and furiously inrushing happening through the bound, lawful movement, through movement as form. The bound binds.'[1]

Above all, it must be dynamic, this ideal behaviour; it must not be complacently picturesque. In T. S. Eliot's later poems this ideal condition appears a little static; the poet may say, 'at the still point, there the dance is', but there is very little energy in that dance, and we have to exert some goodwill before we can register it at all. In some of Wallace Stevens's poems the ideal condition is given as a still life—a blue woman, in August, registering grape leaves and clouds—someone sitting in a park watching the archaic form of a woman with a cloud on her shoulder. These are handsome moments, and we are free to relish them. But Yeats knew that they are at best provisional, at worst evasive; in his greatest poems static effects denote a failure of being.

The Wild Swans at Coole is committed to action; not to thought or concept or feeling, except that these are essential to the full definition of action. We are to register action as the most scrupulous notation of human existence, far more accurate, more 'creatural', than thought or concept—which are simplifications; far more comprehensive, too. Action is silent articulation of experience. Yeats's dancer has outdanced thought, summarized thought in a pattern of gestures. Her dance is an act of desire toward the God-state, or God-term; the dancer strives toward an 'essential' human image, an image of dynamic perfection freely formulated—fulfilled—at the end of the body-line. This is probably what Yeats meant in that great letter which he wrote a few

[1]'Brother Body' (1914): *Pointing the Way*: translated by Maurice Friedman (New York: Harper, 1957), p. 23.

weeks before his death; in which he said, 'It seems to me that I have found what I wanted. When I try to put all into a phrase, I say, "Man can embody truth but he cannot know it." ' Truth is embodied in the figure of action, the dancer for whom meaning is embodied in gesture and gesture the only expression there is. Thought is not enough; even the 'thinking of the body': the most accurate annotation is that act which outdances thought and sums up human potentiality in gesture.

In *The Wild Swans at Coole* the dance which engrosses Yeats is the dance of the self and the anti-self. In 'Ego Dominus Tuus' the Yeatsian speaker says:

I call to the mysterious one who yet
Shall walk the wet sands by the edge of the stream
And look most like me, being indeed my double,
And prove of all imaginable things
The most unlike, being my anti-self,
And, standing by these characters, disclose
All that I seek. . . .

The appropriate gloss is from 'Anima Hominis': 'Unlike the rhetoricians, who get a confident voice from remembering the crowd they have won or may win, we sing amid our uncertainty; and, smitten even in the presence of the most high beauty by the knowledge of our solitude, our rhythm shudders.' Add to this that Art is a vision of reality: in the artist this vision is animated by his own passion, and in the passion his rhythm shudders.

It is also dialogue, the fruitful grappling of self and anti-self. Hence the number of poems in *The Wild Swans at Coole* in which the structure is 'dialogical' and the animation is the rhythm of speech. One of the finest examples is 'The People':

'What have I earned for all that work,' I said
'For all that I have done at my own charge?
The daily spite of this unmannerly town,
Where who has served the most is most defamed,
The reputation of his lifetime lost
Between the night and morning. I might have lived,
And you know well how great the longing has been,
Where every day my footfall should have lit
In the green shadow of Ferrara wall;

This is the mutual flame. A poet, in weariness and self-pity, claims the reward of the rhetorician; quarrelling with others, he makes a sullen rhetoric. He is in the condition of earth, 'the place of heterogeneous things', and he is admonished by his phoenix, the spirit of fire 'that makes all simple'. The common ground between them is the human world, Castiglione's aristocrats and 'the people'. The poet prolongs the dispute by setting up a rivalry between the purity of a natural force and the definitions of the analytic mind; but the dispute is helpless. The real dialogue, the dance, is under the words, in the meeting of selves, the leaping of his heart at her phoenix-words, the sinking of his head abashed. This is the poet's quarrel with himself. If we feel that the only appropriate response to this poem is intimacy and assent, this is—I believe—because it commits itself to the human situation, to the specific occasion of dialogue; it commits itself to time, place, and circumstance, to history, to beginning, middle, and end, to authentic syntax, to action; and—as the animation of all these—to the behaviour of speech, certified idiom. Wallace Stevens in his great essay 'The Noble Rider and the Sounds of Words' persuades us to acknowledge the genial interdependence of reality and the imagination, that when Horatio says, 'Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet prince,/ And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!'—here reality and the imagination are equal and inseparable. In Yeats's poem reality—the violence without, the pressure of external events upon the poet's consciousness—is answered, at once caught, sustained, and 'formed', by his great imagination, the violence within.

Yeats's spokesman in 'Ego Dominus Tuus' justifies his tracing characters upon the sands instead of imitating the great masters: 'Because I seek an image, not a book'. Thought is not enough, though the poet will sometimes fancy otherwise in *The Tower*. The image he seeks is described by Robartes in 'The Phases of the Moon'; at the fourteenth phase 'the soul begins to tremble into stillness, to die into the labyrinth of itself':

All thought becomes an image and the soul
Becomes a body.

The body and the image, I assume, are the dancer and the dance, dynamic, indistinguishable, the final gesture in the dialogue of self and anti-self.

My argument, to bring these matters to a conclusion, is that in *The Wild Swans at Coole* the balloon of speculation is brought into the shed of common experience: in this book more radically than elsewhere Yeats takes 'the living

world for text'. We have to realize this before we can register the impassioned gravity of its later pages.

Perhaps this explains why the poems in *The Wild Swans at Coole* seem peculiarly 'central' to our experience. The burden of meaning has been placed firmly where it belongs, in action, and in the Value embodied in action. The book is an anthology of represented lives in which private vision becomes incarnate in public action; Lionel Johnson, John Synge, George Pollexfen, Robert Gregory, Solomon and Sheba, Iseult Gonne, the anonymous and classic fisherman—and many more. The poems speak to us directly, to our sense of the human predicament; and in the last reckoning this is a more reliable mode of communication than the Great Memory or even the Body.

The human image in this book is at once sweet and serviceable; it hides behind no platitudes that it can see; it does not feel called upon to take possession of the world or to set up as God. It acknowledges human limitation and tries to live as well as possible under that shadow. This image chimes with our own sense of the 'creatural' situation; it is continuous with our own unspectacular experience in its assent to common occasion. Here is one such occasion, in the poem 'Her Praise':

She is foremost of those that I would hear praised,
I have gone about the house, gone up and down
As a man does who has published a new book,
Or a young girl dressed out in her new gown,
And though I have turned the talk by hook or crook
Until her praise should be the uppermost theme,
A woman spoke of some new tale she had read,
A man confusedly in a half dream
As though some other name ran in his head.
She is foremost of those that I would hear praised.
I will talk no more of books or the long war
But walk by the dry thorn until I have found
Some beggar sheltering from the wind, and there
Manage the talk until her name come round.
If there be rags enough he will know her name
And be well pleased remembering it, for in the old days,
Though she had young men's praise and old men's blame,
Among the poor both old and young gave her praise.

Yeats wrote that poem in 1915, the year in which T. S. Eliot wrote Prufrock's more famous love song. Mr Eliot's poem is very rich, but perhaps a little insecure, like the newly rich in any age; it is aware of its affluence, and wears it a little ostentatiously. Yeats's poem seems more comfortable in its older weeds.

In placing these two poems together we move toward a question which can hardly be evaded: was Symbolism necessary?; or was it perhaps an aberration, a retreat? In this case it is impossible to be wise after the event, because the event is still with us: 'modern poetry' still means, for most people, symbolist or post-symbolist poetry, poems like 'The Waste Land' and 'Mauberly'. But in the light of Yeats's great central poems Symbolism seems at best a strategic retreat. Unable to compete with the new, virile sciences, poets conceded to the scientists not only the materials of speech and idea, but—alas!—many of the resources of commonsense. Poetry did not become nonsense, but sense so 'special' and uncommon that it could no longer accommodate the roughage or the rationale of daily experience. Poetry took refuge in an inscrutable 'manner', in an air of large-scale profundity without the restrictions of local meaning; it absolved itself from the rhetoric of argument and proof. This partly accounts for the tendency to assimilate poems to solid objects in space; since statues or apples or urns cannot be required to yield any 'meaning' other than their being. Hence—to cite one example—Mallarmé's poems offer themselves as, in the first instance, visual events, sophisticated and inscrutable arrangements of black marks on a white page. Poetry became sculpture; speech became music.

This is gross oversimplification but justifiable. Perhaps the most incorrigible defect of symbolist poetry is that it is arbitrary; not safely referable to the common life of feeling or to a human situation acknowledged as real. This is where Yeats's solid commonsense imposes itself. He was as 'modern' as any of his contemporaries: he took even greater risks of fancy and magic; but his roots were in common experience, he spoke a common idiom, harboured a tenacious commonsense. He knew that he was human.

There are three letters which must be mentioned even in a brisk account of the question. Yeats wrote them in 1937. To Mrs Moya Davies he said: . . . 'like Balzac I know no one who shares the premises from which I work. What can I do but cry out, lately in simple peasant songs that hide me from the curious'. Then to Dorothy Wellesley: 'I am reading Roger Fry's translation of Mallarmé. He gives the originals and a commentary by a French critic. I find it exciting, as it shows me the road I and others of my time went for certain furlongs. It is not the way I go now, but one of the legitimate roads. He escapes

from history; you and I are in history, the history of the mind. Your "Fire" has a date or dates, so has my "Wild Old Wicked Man".' And finally to Edmund Dulac: 'All my life I have tried to get rid of modern subjectivity by insisting on construction and contemporary words and syntax.'[1]

It was 'Prufrock', though, which brought in the new age and defined the new tone. In recent years many of the younger poets have been labouring to avoid the melody which Mr Eliot and his colleagues established; often picking up snatches of an older tune and rehearsing them again. John Crowe Ransom some time ago discussed the magnificent confusion which obtained in the years after 'Prufrock', and he remarked that present signs suggest that there is still going to be a continuity between the old poetry and the poetry of the 'sixties. I think he hopes that the new poetry will be written under the sign of that sturdy old eagle Thomas Hardy. My own guess is that it will be under the sign of Yeats. Hardy would serve many an occasion, but his human image is a little too long-suffering, hardly strenuous enough, to serve our new needs. The Yeats of *The Wild Swans at Coole* and the Stevens of *The Rock*; these rather than Mr Eliot or Mr Pound would point the new poet toward a properly 'public' poetry, a poetry which would uphold man's intelligence, his reverence for life, and his assent to the common life of feeling.

Those who know about such matters tell us that the young poet writing today wants above all to evade the Symbolist cul-de-sac, that of the poet admiring the image in his own mirror. The new direction is outward; and this is healthy, provided we do not rush to the naturalistic extreme and drown the individual in the destructive element. Yeats would sponsor this new direction, if we think of him now as the poet of *The Wild Swans at Coole*; many of the noblest poems in that book charted it, convinced that human life is substantial, that a moral lexicon should include Alfred Pollexfen if it includes Tamburlane, that a great—literally, great—part of life consists of other people and the values they help us to realize in action. Action may often seem merely the struggle of the fly in marmalade, but the speaker who so describes it in 'Ego Dominus Tuus' also says: 'I seek an image . . . ,' and the seeking is itself action, discipline, and vision. *The Wild Swans at Coole* is a human-sized book, a book of acts, hence of morals. A grammatical analysis would disclose its commitment to 'will' and 'shall' and 'ought', the ground of our own beseeching.

[1] *The Letters of W. B. Yeats*: edited by Allan Wade (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1954), pp. 886, 887, 892.

Paris Letter

FRANCIS FYTTON

War in the 18th Arrondissement

Living in Paris one can hardly fail to be conscious of the Algerian War. Not only are the newspapers full of it, but the outrages of the Secret Army Organization—whose sign like that of the outlawed neo-Fascist party Jeune Nation is a Celtic Cross, or a cross within a circle—are now so numerous and widespread that most Parisians have their own plastic explosion stories, just as during the Blitz most Londoners had their own bomb stories.

Attacks by members of the Algerian National Liberation Front are now fewer, but much more lethal, and much more rigorously investigated by the police. Perhaps the police favour a French rather than an Algerian Algeria, despite the clear self-determination policy of President de Gaulle. Certainly Parisians believe so and will point out that no right-wing terrorist has ever been arrested and brought to trial. This is not quite true, but so nearly so that it does not seem worth denying. Algerian terrorists are, on the other hand, made to feel the full combination of violence and efficiency which characterizes the Municipal Police, the Republican Security Company and the National Gendarmerie. One night this summer the FLN launched a full-scale attack on the Paris police forces, losing thirteen men killed and four wounded and taken prisoner (a curiously inverse ratio to normal battle casualties) without having accomplished anything significant. One policeman was walking home, thoughtfully carrying his sub-machine gun, the mechanically superb MAS 54, when three members of an FLN commando attacked and wounded him; he promptly killed all three. Next morning *Le Figaro* carried a photograph of the huddled bodies, fatally grouped; mute evidence that the Paris flic is quite as quick on the draw as was any Western sheriff and much more formidably armed.

But death accompanies every agent, gendarme and guardian of the peace on his duty. His adversary is almost certain to be armed with knife, gun or hand grenade; perhaps all three. The raider will probably be in a car much more powerful than the under-powered police Renaults or ponderous Citroën Black Marias. Moreover, the FLN commando will regard the killing of a flic not as an unavoidable necessity, but as a tactical triumph in itself. This is worth remembering when the insular and often insolent English visitor sneers at the armament of the Paris police, or comments on their alleged trigger-happiness. Yet so far as I can trace there is no recorded instance of police wounding a passer-by. In Britain when some sub-youth, race-rioter, or lunatic wounds or kills a policeman there is rightly an outcry in the Press for better pay, better conditions, better protection; here the fact is merely recorded. The policeman is another member of the armed forces and, if he is killed, it is in the line of duty. Today it is the invisible firing line of a war that is officially being fought on the other side of the Mediterranean.

Although, however, one cannot help

being aware of the Algerian war in Paris, one is only conscious of it in a single district. That is called Chapelle.

In French usage, Chapelle means not only 'Chapel', but any sort of closed society and it is often applied to the Masons; thus it in one sense corresponds to the English 'clique'. This is rather an apt description of the district of Chapelle, save that it is divided into two violently-opposed cliques: the public and the police.

Legalistally speaking, Chapelle no more exists than does the 'Republic of Montmartre', which is in the same arrondissement, the 18th, collectively and officially called Butte Montmartre. And indeed visitors coming from Central Paris, as most visitors do, in order to ascend the hill to Sacré Coeur either by the funicular railway or the dizzy, knee-swelling flights of stone steps, must pass close by Chapelle. For to do so they will cross the boulevard de Rochechouart, a popular local shopping centre, which also does a brisk trade in selling meals and souvenirs to the poorer or more adventurous tourists who cannot afford the prices of the establishments on the hill. At one end is the place Pigalle, centre of right-bank night life for tourists who are likely to meet Parisian Muslims in rather unattractive occupations: peddling pornographic postcards; pimping; soliciting as homosexuals; or molesting foreign women with a startling lack of discretion and discrimination. At the other end is the boulevard de la Chapelle where the whole Muslim population is engaged, either as a primary or secondary occupation, in the Algerian War. Most visitors cross the boulevard de Rochechouart without ever knowing that they have bypassed a battlefield.

The boulevard de la Chapelle is the southernmost boundary of the district known as Chapelle. To the north it is bounded by the boulevard Ney, which is rather reminiscent of parts of the North Circular Road and, like it, a suburban factory area; to the east, the rue Marx-Dormoy heads north to become the rue de la Chapelle; to the west it is the boulevard Barbès that heads north to become, with a western slant, the boulevard Ornano. This deviation is the only thing that prevents Chapelle from being a perfect oblong. Reading north to south and west to east it is defined at each corner by four Métro stations: Porte de Clignancourt; Barbès - Rochechouart; Porte de la Chapelle; and La Chapelle. The district is divided in two by the great marshalling yards that run from the Gare aux Merchandises in the north to the Gare du Nord in the south. Thus British visitors coming to Paris from Calais or Dunkerque must traverse the district in the last stage of their journey, as they fumble with their luggage and fret about porters and a taxi.

This vast railway cutting divides the district physically and psychologically. The east is industrial and still supposedly communist; a Frenchman of the bourgeoisie still thinks of it as part of the 'Red Belt', though the removal of many workers to the glass and concrete garden suburbs and the relatively high wages paid nowadays by the Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer seem to have toned it down by several shades. In the thirties it was a great place for organizing demonstrations; and the area still manages to raise a contingent every 14th of July to march to the place de la Bastille and brawl with the Republican Security Guards (as did their predecessors with the Garde Mobile whom the

CRS supplanted), whose barracks is conveniently close at hand to this shrine of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. During the Occupation Chapelle provided a section of Francs-Tireurs Partizans, the Communist element of the Resistance, who, rising rather belatedly while their non-political comrades of the Forces françaises de l'Intérieure were battling bloodily in the 5th and 6th Arrondissements, were still in time to harry the Wehrmacht in those fateful days betwen August 19 and 25, 1944, before General Leclerc's 2ème Division Blindée went through Paris like a dose of French liver salts, leaving the late Ernest Hemingway to drink champagne at the Ritz Bar. The erstwhile headquarter of the F-TP is now an outfitters' in the boulevard Barbès; this year, despite the half-dozen names of the fallen recorded upon the commemorative plaque, it was perhaps the only plaque of its kind in Paris not to bear flowers and a wreath. For the communist element has retreated before the Muslim invasion and perhaps no longer likes to be reminded of a working past in the prospect of a petit bourgeois future. Eastern Chapelle can now look down its nose at the towering tenements of the once superior western half; for the leftist sector has become the right side of the tracks.

The Western side, and the whole of the boulevard de la Chapelle to a depth of three or four streets, has become almost exclusively Muslim. This is the description given by the French Press to the Algerian, Tunisian and Moroccan workers who have gone to live there, the former being the vast preponderance. Actually it is rather a loose description as the presence of so many 'Muslim' bars in Chapelle shows; it is rather like describing all Englishmen as *ipso facto* members of the Church of England; for very many Muslims cast off their religious restrictions upon coming to France. Even so simple an act as the traditional 'passing the bottles' in a gang of navvies can cause the break. However the description is convenient in a sense, because the only other term used is 'North African', which strictly speaking includes the colons, or Algerian settlers numbering more than a million who have lived in the country for several generations. The Metropolitan French dislike describing these people as French, since many of them are Spanish-speaking and of Spanish stock, or else the children of Italian immigrants. Secondly, the colons consider themselves as much Algerians as the Arabs or Berbers. It would be convenient to call them 'Christians', in contradistinction to 'Muslims', but the finicking French journalistic tradition of anti-clericalism forbids this. One writes instead of 'Muslims' and 'Europeans', though the former may in reality be Christians and the latter Lebanese.

At all events, the settlement of Muslim workers in Paris has led to Chapelle becoming a sort of Notting Hill, though in fact very few of what the French call 'Black Africans', as against Arabs, go there. The 'Black Africans' are known as peaceable, sober, industrious and regular with the rent: consequently they are welcome in respectable areas where the word 'Muslim' is an anathema to Parisians; there is no colour bar as such in France. The influx of Muslims into Chapelle has been largely due to the deterioration of the west-side property thanks to the marshalling yards; and also the opportunities for un-

skilled labour in these same yards and nearby factories. And it has led to the development of a district in which Arabic is heard more frequently than French and couscous are more in demand than vegetables. The only uncharacteristic thing about these Arabs is also their only outward sign of French culture: an addiction to alcohol.

The other and traditional Arab vice is shown by the fact that almost every hôtel in the boulevard de la Chapelle is a brothel. There are a fair number of brothels in the district; and the filles—both Muslim and French—also loiter in the cafés and on the corners. France has, of course, officially banned brothels and it is only in Chapelle that they are openly tolerated; the reason is simple: they provide the police with links and intelligence centres among an otherwise almost implacably hostile population.

Until the Algerian uprising began, seven years ago, Chapelle had no special tradition of violence other than for that sort of brawling which may be expected in a poor district, full of communists and foreigners. When the Algerian War began, however, the National Liberation Front, or FLN, soon began to see the advantages of levying contributions from the relatively affluent Muslim workers in France. But many Muslim workers saw things in a different light. To begin with, a great number of them were already sending a large part of their earnings home fortnightly to families in Algeria; and again, some of them were by no means in sympathy with the war, still less with the FLN. Many belonged to the Algerian National Movement, or MNA, which pledged itself to secure an independent Algeria in association with France, and to achieve this end by peaceful means. The MNA was originally quite as strong, if not stronger, than the FLN, but suffered as must all liberal-minded movements in competition with extremists; it was moreover pledged to non-violence. The stage was thus set for gangster-style extortion and political terrorism, with all its attendant vendettas.

The FLN were, from the outset, the aggressors. At first, they were chiefly concerned with intimidating their fellow-Muslims into paying up to the fighting funds or paying more. Refusals meant a hand grenade thrown into a café frequented by the MNA, or a burst of automatic fire through the window. In more serious cases, the FLN would place a dynamite charge in the hall of an hotel during the small hours. The favoured weapons were machine pistols and, very occasionally, knives; but poisoned darts have been used several times. In the first blood-letting the FLN commandos in France as in Algeria tended to kill anyone rather than not to kill at all. Very often they were insufficiently briefed in identification and would pick the wrong man; as in the case where they killed two innocent passers-by and let their intended victim escape; or on the occasion when they shot a nurse to enter a hospital and finished off one of their own wounded members in bed, whereas the man they were after was lying injured further down the ward.

There is one peculiar facet of the Algerian War as it is being fought in France: both sides tend to attack their own potential supporters and backsliders rather than each other. There is no recorded example, for instance, of a clash between the OAS and the FLN. The FLN at first concentrated on wiping out the MNA and then upon intimidat-

ing the great bulk of the Muslim population. Later, as strong characters refused to pay, they resorted to individual assassination *pour encourager les autres*. On the other side, the settlers' terrorist organization known as the Red Hand (symbolizing the Muslim Green Hand of Fatima dyed red for vengeance) and, more recently, the Secret Army Organization (OAS) has concentrated on intimidating those Frenchmen who actively favour Algerian independence, usually Gaullists, or liberal-minded intellectuals. It has been the liberals on both sides who have suffered at the expense of the extremists. The OAS is usually careful not to take life in France and has issued a directive to this effect; but President de Gaulle and Muslim journalists are apparently fair game. The Red Hand members are, however, experts in assassination, both of FLN diplomats and arms dealers. Most of their activities have been outside France: especially in Federal Germany, Switzerland, Italy and Czechoslovakia, where they have carried out any number of ingenious murders (the German illustrated weeklies put the figure at more than 200), destroyed ships and aircraft with cargoes of arms for the Algerian rebels, and all without one member ever having been brought to trial. They are less scrupulous than the OAS and recently injured a streetful of Italian children while blowing up an arms dealer.

The FLN, however, has become more ambitious since the funds began to flow in. Thanks to the fact that arms can be sold freely in West Germany owing to a loophole in the Federal Constitution, they soon became formidably armed, despite the successes of the Red Hand. This section of the FLN is known as the Special Organization, or OS, and it soon had the funds and organization to buy or steal cars. The OS then specialized in attacking the Parisian police.

There have been running fights between the OS and police cars in many districts, including one in the fashionable avenue de l'Opéra. There have been even more numerous attacks on Paris police stations; but here again they have conformed to the fratricidal pattern because they are directed against centres of the Muslim auxiliary police, called Harkis, against whom the FLN feels a particular animosity. The station most frequently attacked is called the Goutte d'Or and stands in the boulevard de la Chapelle. This is particularly suitable for high-speed attacks because it has a dual carriageway separated by the stanchions of an overhead Métro, permitting two-way attacks, to say nothing of being set in a triangular block, so that it can be approached three ways. The tactical standard of such attacks is seldom high: the raiders drive past a station with guns blazing and attempt to throw grenades through the door; then they throw more grenades into the street to discourage pursuit. Because such stations are in poor Muslim districts where the children play in the street, many of the victims of these chance grenades are Muslim children.

The police have not been slow to retaliate, and, as I have already indicated, a suspiciously high number of Muslim terrorists are killed in proportion to those taken prisoner. Even the prisoners are almost invariably injured and many die before they can be brought to trial. There are rumours that certain police stations use the sort of water and electrical interrogation that was described by the Communist editor, Henri Alleg, in *The Question* as having been used on

him at the Parachutists' headquarters in Algiers. Reports of beatings-up are widely believed. And the other day I saw sudden confirmation of police brutality, so casually carried out and observed that I can only believe it to be commonplace. And it was a reminder that the Algerian War is also being fought in France.

One Sunday when Paris had been alerted against another right-wing military putsch, a friend and I went for a late lunch to the rue Marx-Dormoy. The Chapelle district, like any workers' quarter, had many good and cheap restaurants. This one is a lorry drivers' pull-in, which used to be called 'Restaurant aux Routiers'. It is characteristic of the changed social climate of communist Chapelle that it recently changed management and has been renamed 'Café des Chauffeurs'.

We left the Métro at La Chapelle and walked up the rue Marx-Dormoy, only to find the place closed for the annual summer holiday that drains the capital each August and part of September. So we retraced our steps and turned the corner into the boulevard de la Chapelle en route for the boulevard de Rochechouart, where one can always get a meal.

The first thing we noticed about the boulevard de la Chapelle was that a series of temporary barricades had been erected, slowing traffic to a crawl and blocking side-turnings; the second was that there were more police about than passers-by; the third that most of the girls were missing from their accustomed doorways; and the fourth that the atmosphere was like that of a film set, and the film would have been *High Noon*.

The police were in groups of twos and threes. One man in each group carried a sub-machine gun and sometimes a second man was similarly armed. They also, of course, wore standard pistols and batons. The men with automatic weapons had their uniform pockets stuffed with extra clips of ammunition. The groups were standing on both sides of the street so that they could enfilade any attacking car. They were at twenty-foot intervals along the frontage of the Goutte d'Or block and continued all the way up the sides of the triangle to the intersection behind the station. There must have been at least forty of them. In the far carriageway, beyond the overhead Métro, there were three Black Marias, coach-sized, filled with armed police. The Goutte d'Or suddenly seemed like a lonely outpost in a savage land, though we could still see the dome of the Sacré Coeur over the rooftops.

There were two guards outside the station itself, standing behind breast-high concrete shields, each with a machine-rifle. There were two more standing and regarding the few passers-by.

As we approached, the two latter stopped a group of three Muslims and a Frenchman who were coming in the opposite direction. The Muslims stood passively with their arms raised and their legs straddled while they were searched for concealed weapons: always a humiliating and rather disgusting business even when done by experts, as these police certainly were. Then the Muslims were pushed and shoved into the station. The Frenchman, who was very tall, middle-aged, and carrying a brown paper parcel, produced some papers from his wallet. A policeman took these and searched him. Curiously enough he did not bother about the

parcel. Then they began to push him too inside. As he passed the concrete shield at the door he made some remark to the guard; we were still too far away to hear what was said, but perhaps it was the old crack about the flic being no better than his gun. It was certainly ill-considered. The guard laid down his sub-machine gun, measured the prisoner and hit him. The prisoner was trapped in the angle of the entrance. Every time the guard hit him the prisoner's head snapped back against the angle of the door-frame. The guard hit him eight times in all, using both hands like a professional. He was a big, broad-shouldered flic and all the blows were correctly delivered straight from the shoulder, the weight of his body behind them, using the knuckle part of the fist. Every blow hit the prisoner in the face. When it was over the other two flics carried the prisoner inside. His fingers were still entangled in the string of his parcel.

As we passed, the guard was looking down at his knuckles and smiling. He had a little Errol Flynn moustache. The old whore who was sitting on a chair outside the brothel next door to the Goutte d'Or got up and went inside. She was looking eloquent, but she said nothing. Beyond the Goutte d'Or block, the shopping crowds were out. We went into the first Muslim café and ordered wine. It was the first time a barman has ever run to serve me. There were only a few Muslims in the place, drinking or reading newspapers, but the barman kept looking from them to us. He snatched away our glasses almost before we had emptied them and I had to remind him of the reckoning. Perhaps he didn't want to get the name of mixing with Europeans.

We had lunch in the boulevard de Rochechouart and then returned to the Goutte d'Or where things were as tense as ever, and the eastern end of the boulevard de la Chapelle was still being shunned. We watched a Harki patrol come out of the station and followed them for some way on their beat. There were five of them and they walked like infantry rather than police. The flaps of their holsters were under the butts of their pistols. When the brigadier leading the patrol crossed the street to investigate the occupants of a café he was followed at a few paces to the left by a second man. Then a third crossed and stood outside, facing inwards. The other two remained on the opposite pavement and faced outwards towards the ends of the street, resting their right hands on the butts of their pistols. They acted in this way without the brigadier having to give orders. They stopped and searched all Muslim passers-by with a sort of brutal good humour. They even made a joke about a bullet scar in the entrance doors to a rather charming private courtyard. But they were intensely alert, and constantly checked the upper windows as well as those at street level.

Apparently the tension was caused by a report that the OS intended to blow up the Goutte d'Or that day, in the belief that its garrison would be weakened by having to send men on anti-putsch exercises in central Paris; but the police got news of the plot. The next day the tension had relaxed to normal: police were still posted round the block and at both sides of the street, but there were only a dozen of them. And people no longer seemed afraid to pass the Goutte d'Or.

Indeed, the residents of Chapelle

appear to have become immune to the tension. I had an example of this later in the week when I dined in a French home there, and mentioned the incident to my hostess.

'Oh,' she replied, 'there's been no trouble here. The shootings and the stabbings have always been at the other side of this block.'

Theatre

JOHN WHITING

Time for Tragedy

Mr Christopher Fry's new play[1] is a very remarkable piece of work, indeed. In content, form and execution it makes a lot of the stuff, and I use the word with care, put on our stages at this time look juvenile, careless and shabby. But there is an ironical point here. *Curtmantle* has not yet been put on an English stage.

Of course, Mr Fry suffers a disadvantage in the theatre at the moment by being a poet and a wit. More than that, he is a poet who writes poetry and a wit who has wisdom. He is also an excellent craftsman. He sees man as a human animal, a creature with his tragic sense rooted deeper than in his social environment. He believes man to have a lively, and sometimes comic, relationship with God. He understands that a crown is as removable as a cap. There are precedents for this way of thinking. Shakespeare, for example.

Curtmantle is the story of King Henry the Second of England. He was known as Curtmantle, it seems, from the short, plain cloak he wore. The play covers the period of Henry's reign from 1154 to 1189.

Mr Fry has a prologue of great subtlety. It is night. The king is on the march. In confusion and loss a group of flotsam, a barber, a juggler, a huckster among others, pose the question 'Where is the king?'

Then follow three acts of search and revelation, conceived and executed in brilliant dramatic terms. At the centre of all stands the character of the king, vividly set against his time. This is a man, a royal man, a man apart, yet deeply committed, a sensual man, a man of wit, humanity, faith and power. Totally comprehensible, he is undoubtedly Mr Fry's greatest achievement in any play so far.

The play concerns itself with the creation and examination of this man. He is seen as monarch and soldier. There is the conflict with Becket, and in this Mr Fry reveals his art as a dramatist. By keeping the character of Becket, as extraordinary and powerful a man as Henry, under the strictest control, indeed, by almost muting the part, Mr Fry achieves a concentrated power. There is the marriage to Eleanor of Aquitaine, and in a fine scene Mr Fry shows the ruthless, human figure of the king, breaking in on the conversation of courtly love. It is a scene which should delight the new puritans. Henry's conflict with his sons, with the Church, with France and with the State all contribute to the astonishing portrait.

And at the end, at the death of the

[1] *Curtmantle* by Christopher Fry. Oxford University Press. 10s. 6d.

king, we are made to understand that the beginning was no arbitrary preface. For Henry's bastard son, Roger, who is with him at his death, was conceived with a whore in a tent, in the night, in the rain, among the confusion of the camp. So, the most casual and thoughtless act can be with us at the end.

The play is enclosed by this. So it achieves form. It becomes more than a personal statement, it becomes a work of art.

The play is written in both prose and verse. By this means Mr Fry manages great rhythmic subtlety and emphasis. No actor could ask for a greater clarity of poetic diction than can be found here.

Let me quote a passage to show what I mean.

At the end of the second act Henry, humanly moved to momentary rage by Becket's intransigence, cries out: 'Who will get rid of this turbulent priest for me?' The barons, silent and unseen by Henry, go to the murder of Becket. Henry, understanding their purpose sends after them. He speaks:

Dear Christ, the day that any man would dread
Is when life goes separate from the man,
When he speaks what he doesn't say, and does
What is not his doing, and an hour of the day
Which was unimportant as it went by
Comes back revealed as the satan of all hours,
Which will never let the man go. And then
He would see how the natural poisons in him
Creep from everything he sees and touches
As though saying, 'Here is the world you created
In your own image.' But this is not the world
He would have made. Sprung from a fraction of life,
A hair-fine crack in the dam, the unattended
Moment sweeps away the whole attempt,
The heart, thoughts, belief, longing
And intention of the man. It is infamous,
This life is infamous, if it uses us
Against our knowledge or will.

So here at the centre of the play is 'the unimportant hour', 'the unattended moment', as it was at the beginning down with the whore in the tent. And both times it leads to death. The first Becket's, attended with remorse; the second Henry's, attended by the love of his bastard son.

Let me not over-simplify. The play is very complex in theme and motives. And the moral statement which many people, especially the young, seem to look for in a work of art nowadays is not at once apparent. But it would be a dull person indeed, one most out of touch with life as it is lived, who did not recognize that Mr Fry is dealing with problems, in an historical context, which face the normal, sensual man today: dealing with them, moreover, with the compassionate understanding not of a social reformer, but of a poet. He is a man deeply committed to the concern of his fellow beings, and to many of us this seems the proper form of commitment for a poet for these times.

The honest will find only two examples in this play of the artificiality

of which Mr Fry is sometimes accused. I may as well put them down.

> Steady, now, steady. What makes you think he'll see a gaunt, atrocious man rushing in on him out of the dark?

and

> The clutching, adoring, beseeching hystericoes
> Are pressing and groaning round him like a frozen sea.

This sort of thing was once described, although not by me—I'll come into the open, it was *about* me—as adjectival hysteria. Mr Fry falls into the error only twice in a magnificent play. It is forgivable. And the remedy is simple. A pencil.

Now let me wander from the point a little.

Mr Fry's play, I suppose, is a tragedy. The origin of the word—goat-song—is, I believe, obscure. But everybody knows pretty well what is meant when the word is applied.

Very well. Mr Kenneth Tynan recently headed three columns with the words: No time for tragedy. Now either Mr Tynan or his sub-editor or somebody has an over-developed sense of the ambiguous. Has Mr Tynan no time for tragedy, or have we no time for it, or is this no time for it? Mr Tynan is a committed man, he tells us. Is it possible to commit himself a little more exactly in his headings? And his titles, for that matter. As Miss Mary Macarthy pointed out the title of Mr Tynan's collected criticism, *Curtains*, is open to misconception.

This is not a time for tragedy. Let us take it as that. Let us understand Mr Tynan as meaning that the theatre is incapable of dealing with the problems of today without retreating into irony, parody and satire. In short, that it is incapable of interpreting life on the level it is, and always has been, lived, which is tragic. For someone like Mr Tynan, who has always seemed to believe that art can be a powerful social force, this is defeatism on a large scale.

Mr Tynan's arguments are specious. He writes: '*Death of a Salesman*, for example, is not a tragedy; its catastrophe depends entirely on the fact that the company Willy Loman works for has no pensions scheme for its employees. What ultimately destroys Willy is economic injustice, which is curable, as the ills that plague Oedipus are not.'

Now this is nonsense. Willy Loman died, as we shall all die, because he was a foolish, weak man. This is true, in spite of what Mr Arthur Miller, his creator, may have us believe. The same is true of Oedipus, although it would not be difficult to explain his tragedy in the social terms of the day. And may I ask this? Does Mr Tynan mean that supernatural forces existed in Oedipus's time which no longer exist today? What has happened to them? Have they been rationalized by rationalism? Not yet, by God.

Mr Tynan goes on: 'Radical social reforms are inimical to the tragic sense, since they offer alternatives to defeat. . . .' Do they offer alternatives to death, the misery of love, betrayal, or a sense of personal failure, all of which are the stuff of tragedy. When they do it'll be the day, and I too will hang out the banner No Time for Tragedy.

After skidding dangerously over this classic Marxist position towards tragedy, Mr Tynan comes to this: 'Powerfully helped by the rationalist crusade against belief in the supernatural, the assumption that man is capable of moulding his

destiny has become the *idée reçue* of modern drama—the essential common ground between playwright and audience.'

Then Mr Tynan plunges. He asks us to follow him into the formidable argument that comedy must in the future take over from tragedy. And he quotes authors such as Ionesco, N. F. Simpson and Pinter to prove this. Now all these writers are totally concerned with the *incapability* of man to mould his own destiny. Their plays demonstrate the futility and absurdity which occurs when a man attempts to do so. Mr Tynan then stops the argument, rather suddenly, with two dots, and passes on to review a new play.

What are we to understand by all this?

That rationalists are incapable of writing tragedy or witnessing it because of their faith, or lack of it. I once knew a rationalist whose wife left him, and he was just as miserable as any Christian. If I'd suggested to him that radical social reform would have done him some good he'd have thrown his empty bed at me.

Tragedy is not an instrument which can be used for the social good. All right. Lots of things cannot be used for the social good. All right.

Mr Fry's marvellous play probably comes into this category. All the same, when the day comes and Mr Tynan's radical social reforms are working at full blast, and there are no more bombs, and pensions for all, this play will still be valid. For the tragedy of men is that they are men. And when there is food and drink, houses and clothing, peace, security and sanity for all, men will still be scared to death of death. The germ of tragedy will still be there. I hope.

Architecture

LIONEL BRETT

The Last Social Moralist

For a month I have had this great book[1] round my neck like an albatross. Lewis Mumford's *Technics and Civilization* and *Culture of Cities*, with Le Corbusier's *Vers une Architecture*, were the source-books of my generation of architects, like the *Architecture of Humanism* for our parents and the *Seven Lamps* for our great-grandparents (our grandparents, the Edwardians, didn't read books of this kind). If Le Corbusier was our Shaw and Frank Lloyd Wright our Lawrence, Lewis Mumford was our H. G. Wells: the confident polymath who had plotted the way forward. Now, like Wells at the end of his life, Mumford is at the end of his tether, and the tone is sombre.

The theme of the whole work is the innate dualism of the human race, for ever oscillating between the still and silent female principle, life-conserving, loving, anti-rational, and the restless argumentative male principle, with its addiction to geometry, mass-organization and war. He sees the first in the neolithic farming community, the second in the roaming paleolithic hunter, and he sees the earliest cities as the re-assertion of the paleolithic: the soft village paying protection money to the gang chief. But *Homo sapiens* was not originally warlike. The earliest cultivators and inventors were women.

[1] *The City in History* by Lewis Mumford. (Secker and Warburg. 70s.)

'Round buildings antedated square ones.'

The city began as the home of a god: 'first a magnet, then a container'. In other words, its attraction as a source of awe and wonder preceded the realization of its economic power. But it was the compression that generated the power.

'The many diverse elements of the community hitherto scattered over a great valley system and occasionally into regions far beyond, were mobilized and packed together under pressure, behind the massive walls of the city. Even the gigantic forces of nature were brought under conscious human direction: tens of thousands of men moved into action as one machine under centralized command, building irrigation ditches, canals, urban mounds, ziggurats, temples, palaces, pyramids, on a scale hitherto inconceivable.'

But he is sceptical of the pretensions of Periclean Athens, with its chaotic layout and politics, its reliance on slaves and amateurs, and its bad drains, and he is puritanically aghast at Roman materialism, a 'megalopolitan elephantiasis' prophetic of our own. His nostalgia is reserved for the snug mediaeval town, with its closed vistas and back gardens and air full of the sound of bells, and he returns to the contrasting images of the winding mediaeval procession on the one hand, in which a man could 'see himself in advance' and participant and spectator were one, and the dead straight vanishing perspective of a Baroque parade, with the spectators in the gutter.

'In walking, the eye courts variety, but above this gait, movement demands repetition of the units that are to be seen: it is only so that the individual part, as it flashes by, can be recovered and pieced together. What would be monotony for a fixed position or even in procession, becomes a necessary counter-poise to the pace of fast-moving horses.'

'The esthetic effect of the regular ranks and the straight line of soldiers is increased by the regularity of the avenue: the unswerving line of march greatly contributes to the display of power, and a regiment moving thus gives the impression that it would break through a solid wall without losing a beat. That, of course, is exactly the belief that the soldier and the Prince desire to inculcate in the populace: it helps keep them in order without coming to an actual trial of strength, which always carries the bare possibility that the army might be worsted. Moreover, on irregular streets, poorly paved, with plenty of loose cobblestones and places of concealment, the spontaneous formations of untrained people have an advantage over a drilled soldiery: soldiers cannot fire around corners, nor can they protect themselves from bricks heaved from chimney tops immediately overhead: they need space to manoeuvre in. Were not the ancient mediaeval streets of Paris one of the last refuges of urban liberties?'

These are characteristic insights.

Technics and Civilization pointed the same kind of contrast between the clean pre-industrial 'eotechnic' age of windmills and canals, whose energy came from natural 'income', and the filthy 'paleotechnic' age of coal and iron and steam, whose energy came from the world's stock of natural capital. But now both fall under the lash, the first for its pursuit of pleasure, the second for its pursuit of wealth. In the first age, cities that had been organic expressions of human interdependence were super-

ficially smartened up, while behind the scenes the green gardens were built on and became slums; in the second, they were turned into immense and ever-expanding black barracks for the new wage-slaves. Moreover our own age (the 'neotechnic') which in the earlier books was to come to the rescue with electricity, aluminium and garden cities, is now just another failure, unable apparently to control the Gadarene descent into subtopian sprawl, traffic paralysis and, more likely than not, genocidal war.

Hundreds of holes can be shot in this grandiose Toynbeean edifice. The first and most obvious is that a history ranging so widely in time and carrying such a weight of generalization should surely range as widely in space. How do Peking and Moscow and Ahmedabad and Ibadan fit into the picture? It is surely worth noting that the neolithic village still survives in India, the mediaeval walled town in Africa, though neither quite comes up to the expectations one derives from their romanticized past. Even within Europe, if Rome was so hellish, what is one to say of Pompeii, and if Chipping Campdem and Bruges were so heavenly, what of mediaeval Milan, which before the Black Death had 200,000 inhabitants and three doctors? Mr Mumford invites this sort of low-grade *tu quoque* criticism by the doggedness with which he pursues his friends and enemies.

It seems doubtful whether *cities*, compared with houses or small towns, are in fact the reliable cultural indicators that they are required to be for the author's purposes. For one thing, as we know too well, an age doesn't get the cities it deserves or achieve those it can visualize. London can have changed very little between the Wars of the Roses and the Armada, yet in that century the spirit of the British people was transformed. Nor perhaps should our own age take all the rap for the congested conurbations we are stuck with and struggling to clean up: we would no doubt prefer to be judged by Stockholm and San Francisco and Brazilia and even little Cumbernauld, none of which get a mention.

The truth is that cities are not organisms and are not classifiable in the biological terms Lewis Mumford took over from Patrick Geddess forty years ago. They are human artefacts, conditioned by infinitely variable sets of ends and means—of human desires modified by economic facts. In every age, dreams of wealth and happiness have brought great multitudes together and produced congestion and plagues as a rough corrective; in every age there have been many sleepy and cosy old towns and villages and a few neat and elegant new ones. Our own problems have been aggravated by the population explosion and the intervention of the motor car, but then we are better equipped to tackle them. The *qualitative* changes in the character of urban life can be exaggerated. Great cities have always inspired mixed feelings of excitement and frustration, wonder and horror; small towns have always been snug but dull. Even the suburban dream was charmingly put into words 500 years ago by Alberti. 'There is a vast deal of satisfaction in a convenient retreat near the town, where a man is at liberty to do just what he pleases.'

But Mr Mumford cannot take this cool and no doubt flat view of the city in history, firstly because he is haunted by Orwellian dreams of the past and

nightmares of the future, and secondly because he is impelled by an Emersonian compulsion to preach. It is his myth that somewhere in time or space there was a City, not too small or too big, not too open or congested, where all the senses were elated and life was lived in joyous harmony with nature. Finding no such place in his experience, he places it in the period from which least evidence survives to contradict him: the Middle Ages.

'Slowly, the life of the old towns dried up, their walls hollow shells, harbouring institutions that were also hollow shells. Today it is only as it were, by holding the shell quietly to one's ear, as with a sea shell, that one can catch in the ensuing pause the dim roar of the old life that was once lived, with dramatic conviction and solemn purpose, within its walls.'

Beside it he sets New York, the modern equivalent of Rome, and blind to its exhilarating beauty and drama, he overwhelms us—as his ponderous style formidably equips him to do—with the nightmare potentialities of Megalopolis, Motopolis and final Necropolis. Only at the very end of his great book, in a lucid moment, he sees the eternal rôle of the great city as 'the best organ of memory man has yet created', where the past and the present of the whole world are gathered together and made available on demand to the remotest up-country subscriber.

'The mixture of divinity, power, and personality that brought the ancient city into existence must be weighed out anew in terms of the ideology and the culture of our own time, and poured into fresh civic, regional and planetary moulds.'

A writer whom one finds oneself in a few paragraphs comparing with Wells, Toynbee, Orwell and Emerson is no light-weight. Lewis Mumford is the last of the great late-Victorian and post-Victorian social moralists, who laid the philosophical foundations of our welfare services and town and country planning, such as they are. But those last four words are the point. Further progress along the line of argument Mr Mumford mapped out for himself and relentlessly pursued is unnecessary, even if it were conceivable. Our problems are those of realization. Even in the rich countries, slums and urban blight are created faster than we can replace them, and in the poor countries there seems no hope at all of catching up with the population explosion. It is not merely a question of diverting what we spend on armaments; if it were, Tokyo and Sydney would be the most civilized cities on earth. Nor is it a question of diverting what we spend on advertising and gambling; if it were, post-revolution Moscow and Peking would not be the soul-destroying places they are. It is a question of bringing together the humane vision possessed by some people with the economic power possessed by others.

In the depressed silence that must greet such a far-fetched proposal, one must add that the tragedy of Lewis Mumford and his whole generation of reformers is that their ideas, which if they are anything at all are on the side of life, have come to seem life-denying. The interwar 'garden-city-enthusiast', in his homespun and sandals, and the faceless post-war 'planner', inherited from Ebenezer Howard and Patrick Geddess (via Mumford) a high-minded distaste for the beery old squalors and black dangers of city life that were part of its rich brew of fun and filth. In the

search for workable equivalents, for *solutions* realizable in a reasonable gia is reserved for the snug mediaeval mare vision of the *problem* gives very little guidance. Our mood has changed. Nowadays, if a writer takes up the theme of the City of Dreadful Night, it is to tell us what a good place it was.

Selected Books

COLIN WILSON

Nikos Kazantzakis

Five of Kazantzakis's major works have been translated in England, and even more in America, and yet his name remains almost totally unknown to the majority of readers. This is a curious situation, which may be due in part to the fact that Kazantzakis wrote in Greek, and that modern readers do not expect to come upon a great Greek writer; even his name has a foreign and discouraging sound. If he had written in Russian and been called Kazantzovsky, his works would no doubt be as universally known and admired as Sholokov's.

There is something of tragedy in this—even though Kazantzakis has been dead since 1958. Readers who are familiar with his life and works have no doubt that here is a writer who can stand with the nineteenth century giants, with Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Nietzsche (with all of whom he has affinities). And yet he made very little money from his writing, and the *Columbia Dictionary of Modern European Literature* does not even bother to mention him.

When writing about Kazantzakis, it is difficult to avoid the over-coloured words associated with Nietzsche and Dostoevsky, 'suffering giant', 'spiritual torment', etc. They were appropriate enough in the nineteenth century, but seem out of place in our own. Yet the truth is that Kazantzakis was a man of the nineteenth century; he is too much the primitive for the age of Freud and Joyce. A typical story illustrates this. In May 1922, when he was thirty-nine, Kazantzakis was living in Vienna. He had passed through two important periods: an early period of total romanticism, strongly influenced by D'Annunzio and Nietzsche, and then a period of Christian ascetiscism, when Christ became his ideal symbol. Finally, hediscovered the Buddha, and began to practise total renunciation, at the same time writing an immense drama on Gautama. (This was eventually published in 1956.) One evening in the theatre, Kazantzakis fell into conversation with a most attractive woman who sat next to him. They left the theatre together and walked the streets until late, discussing ideas; finally, Kazantzakis invited her back to his room. She explained that she could not come immediately, but would come the following evening. The next morning, Kazantzakis woke, and found that his lips had swelled, and the flesh of his face was becoming bloated. He wrote to the woman, putting her off and asking her to come the next day instead. However, his flesh was even more swelled on the next day, and his lower lip began to run with a yellow liquid. The meeting had to be indefinitely postponed. Some weeks later, Kazantzakis attended the theatre, his face swathed in bandages,

when he was approached by a man who asked him if he would mind answering a question. Kazantzakis agreed. The man asked what rôle eroticism played in Kazantzakis's life. Kazantzakis was shocked; the man then introduced himself as Wilhelm Stekel, the psychiatrist, and asked Kazantzakis to call and see him the next day. He did so, and ended by telling Stekel the story of the woman in the theatre. Stekel was delighted, and told Kazantzakis that he was suffering from 'Saint's disease', a malady common in the Middle Ages, but almost totally unknown today. When the desert ascetics of the Middle Ages felt that they could no longer fight the temptations of sex, they would walk towards the cities. But very often, their bodies would break out in horrible running sores, the faces became bloated, and a yellow liquid dropped from the sores. This was the subconscious resistance to sin (which the saints supposed to be a punishment from God). Kazantzakis had also been obsessed for years by the idea of total asceticism, and had left his wife for this reason. As soon as Kazantzakis left Vienna, the sores disappeared.

This anecdote tells a great deal about Kazantzakis, his strength and his weakness, and the impressions are verified by his works. In the primitive simplicity of his approach to life and 'salvation', he was not a man of our time. Photographs show a heavily built man with a Nietzsche moustache and sensuous lips. He fought tremendous battles with himself. But one cannot help feeling sometimes that he was like an impatient man trying to open a door the wrong way under the impression that it is jammed. All his work creates an impression of seething, violent torment; and yet one wonders whether he was not doing things the hard way out of ignorance. He was a non-stop traveller, rushing from one end of the world to the other as if possessed. In the same way, he was a non-stop 'mental traveller' (and the violent and bloody images of Blake's poem of that title fit in singularly well with the whole mood of Kazantzakis). From German romanticism, through Christian asceticism (he spent six months alone in a monastery, trying to see 'the vision of God', but gave it up), through Buddhism and Communism, to the final phase (which lasted a quarter of a century) of great artistic creation, with such works as his *Odyssey* (a 700 page epic poem), *Zorba the Greek*, *Christ Recrucified*, *Freedom after Death* and *The Last Temptation*.

Shortly after the Vienna phase of 1922, Kazantzakis went to Berlin, where he wrote a 'credo' called *The Saviours of God* (sub-titled 'ascetic exercises'), and fell in with a group of young communists. He studied Lenin, and conceived a great admiration for his personality; typically, this was his way of becoming a communist. Later, he attended a cultural congress in Moscow, and then journeyed from end to end of the Soviet Union on a free railway ticket provided by the communists. But in his usual protean way, he was outgrowing Lenin as his ideal figure. His basic philosophy was always closer to Gide's: the necessity of never being attached to any external 'truth', of continually contradicting oneself and returning over one's tracks. Although this philosophy never led Kazantzakis to the same lengths of weakness and fickleness for its own sake as with Gide, it also produced a certain inner-confusion in his greatest work. Having abandoned

GO WELL- GO SHELL

Cars are thankful
for every tankful
of Super Shell with I.C.A.
(and engines are grateful
when they're Multigrade-ful)

YOU CAN BE SURE OF SHELL

Nietzsche, Christ, St Francis, Gautama and Lenin, Kazantzakis now turned to Odysseus, and began his greatest work, the epic poem in which Odysseus leaves Ithaca for the second time (like Tennyson's Ulysses) and goes in search of 'God' or a meaning for human existence. Like all books about men who travel in search of meaning—Hesse's novels, for example—his *Odyssey, A Modern Sequel*, is ultimately unsatisfactory. But its sheer creative greatness cannot be denied. The goal may be a failure, but the journey is probably the greatest in modern literature. It is impossible to offer an adequate summary of the poem here. (There is an excellent book about it by the author's friend Prevelakis, *Kazantzakis and His Odyssey*, which has been published in America and which, one hopes, will be published eventually in England.) It begins when Ulysses re-sheathes his sword after killing the suitors. But he finds life in Ithaca a bore, and decides to set out again on his travels. He renounces human happiness in the form of Nausicaa, but marries her to his son Telemachus, and then leaves Ithaca for the last time. He takes five companions, with such curious names as Captain Clam, Hardihood, Kentaur, Orpheus and Granite, selecting them for their different qualities. He sails to Sparta and steals Helen of Troy again from Menelaus; the violation of hospitality (which involves killing a guard) symbolizes his Nietzschean rejection of 'morality'. In Crete (the home of Kazantzakis) he takes part in a sexual orgy, and ends by setting fire to the palace. He deserts Helen and goes on to Egypt. There he takes part in a worker revolt, and comes close to being executed; however, he dances in front of the king wearing a horrible wooden god-mask, and Pharoah sets him free. He now decides to found the ideal city-state at the source of the Nile. After battles with a negro tribe, Odysseus has a vision of God on a mountain, and then they build their Ideal City. It is only just completed when an earthquake destroys it. Odysseus experiences total despair at the destruction of all his companions, but now feels that he is fully aware of the illusory nature of the world. But he rejects the temptation to suicide and travels on. In subsequent books he meets figures who are thinly disguised versions of Gautama, Don Quixote and Christ. In Don Quixote he 'salutes a madness equal to my own', but rejects his vision as he has rejected Gautama's. Odysseus is ultimately the life-affirmer, the lover of the earth. He makes his last voyage towards the South Pole in a boat, and the last three books are occupied with a description of this voyage, ending with an impressive evocation of the snowy wastes (for which Kazantzakis drew on his memories of Russia's tundra regions). Odysseus climbs on to an iceberg, where the spirit of his old companions join him, and he finally dies. The ending is as noisy as the end of a Wagner opera and as rhetorical as the last scene of *Faust*, but it does not give one the impression that Odysseus has found what he set out to find.

Such a summary can do no justice to the poem (which has been superbly translated by Kimon Friar), but it may give some idea of the sheer excitement of its wide sweep. It produces the 'effect like music' that someone once described as the effect of *War and Peace*.

The *Odyssey* is the most important work by Kazantzakis; eventually, his reputation must stand or fall by it. It is

The Chameleon and the Clown

"You're very clever," said the Clown,
"At doing what you do,
But though I'm no chameleon
I'm quite a mimic too.
If someone stole my Guinness, say,
Then I'd change colour right away.
I'd go quite green with envy if
They took my favourite drink—
A fellow needs one every day
To keep him in the pink,
So if you're ever feeling blue
Then always go and have a few."
"I'm feeling like a Guinness now,"
The saurian replied,
"And if you watch me very close
I'll look like one, beside."
But though he turned a darker hue
He bore no likeness to the brew.
The poor Chameleon blushed at this,
He went a fiery red.
"That's nothing like a Guinness, no!"
The Clown abruptly said.
"But nothing is—you're not to blame—
Except another of the same."
And that's the MORAL of this fable
Guinness is quite in-im-it-able.

Guinness

is good for you—and me

G.E.3667

hard to believe that such a work could be written in the twentieth century, when Eliot has talked so convincingly about the difficulty of finding an 'objective correlative' for the artist. Kazantzakis has ignored all the objections—particularly the objection that he comes too long after Homer, a member of a self-divided, analytical culture, and therefore *cannot* write a convincing epic.

The lesson is an interesting one. So many modern writers declare that their honesty compels them to write about defeat and futility, and to focus their attention on a pool of tea on a tabletop. 'Modern life being what it is . . .' Kazantzakis makes one aware that it is not a question of modern life, but of the artist himself.

The *Odyssey* was written seven times between 1924 and Christmas 1938, when it finally appeared in Greece in a limited edition. The critics were puzzled. The poem was immense—33,333 lines long. The spelling was peculiar—Kazantzakis was like Shaw in his desire for a reform of the alphabet—and Kazantzakis dispensed with most of the Greek accentuation. The seventeen syllable lines were not easy to grasp on a first reading. It would be near the truth to say that the poem was a flop. (Kazantzakis was already known as a poet for his translations of *The Divine Comedy* and *Faust*.) Undismayed, Kazantzakis went on to write his series of great novels. *Captain Michalis* (translated as *Freedom and Death* in England and *Freedom or Death* in the US) was begun in 1936, *Zorba the Greek* was written in 1942 (published 1946), *Christ Recrucified* in 1948, *The Last Temptation* in 1951, and *The Poor Man of God* in 1953. There is also an unpublished novel with the curious title: *'He says he wants freedom, kill him'*, and an early novel about Russia, *Toda Raba*. The 'ascetic exercises', *The Savours of God*, are also of considerable importance.

It is possible to offer only the briefest comments on these works in the present essay. *Captain Michalis* is important to a full understanding of Kazantzakis. Its original title was *My Father*, and it deals with the unsuccessful rebellion of the Cretans against the Turks in 1889. Kazantzakis was old enough to remember this clearly, as well as the final rebellion of 1896, when the Turks were finally expelled. Crete had been oppressed by the Turks for a hundred years, and there had been many bloody uprisings and endless violence. On one occasion, a monastery was besieged by Turks; as they rushed into the courtyard, a young fighter fired his rifle into the open powder-barrels in the basement. Six hundred women and children were hiding there; the monastery and everyone in it was blown to atoms. In these risings, both sides were completely merciless; women would be raped and murdered, children bayoneted, the men often tortured to death.

The novel is a huge, leisurely affair that reminds one sometimes of *War and Peace*, sometimes of Dylan Thomas's *Under Milk Wood* in its detailed and amusing description of the private lives of the people of Megalocastro. Its hero is the 'wild beast' Captain Michalis (Kazantzakis's father was also Captain Michalis, and was also known as 'the wild beast'; but he was not, like the hero of the novel, killed in 1889.) He is a typical Kazantzakis figure, of immense physical strength, taciturn, brooding, completely brave. He is obsessed by a beautiful Circassian girl, the wife of his blood brother Nuri Bey, a Turk; but,

being a self-divided man, he never gets around to sleeping with her, although she would have been happy enough. The novel is full of seductions, sex and slaughter; it would be very easy to parody it in the manner of *Cold Comfort Farm*, with its strong, silent men and sensual women. But one only has to read fifty pages of it to realize that, whatever Kazantzakis's faults as a man he was the greatest European artist since Tolstoy. But in one respect he falls below Tolstoy. He never seems to question whether all this slaughter is worthwhile, or whether his heroic men are only hot-headed fools. His power as a writer is so great that the reader is not aware of this while he actually reads the book. But at the end, when Michalis and his followers allow themselves to be slaughtered merely because they are too proud to surrender, one feels that there was something seriously lacking in Kazantzakis if he didn't feel the futility of the whole thing. Shaw said: 'When the shooting starts, I get under the bed'; one wishes Kazantzakis's heroes had half as much sense.

This brings up another point about Kazantzakis. He was all his life ashamed of being a 'pen pusher', and hankered after the life of action. This again reveals a curious immaturity. In the novel, Michalis's nephew is also a poet and a 'pen pusher' who lives abroad; he returns to Crete at the end of the novel, and dies with his uncle in the final stupid act of resistance. One suspects that Kazantzakis saw himself as the nephew, and was somehow trying to propitiate his father's ghost.

This same self-division is apparent in the other novels. *Zorba the Greek* is the most amusing of these; it is told in the first person by Kazantzakis, who meets Zorba in a waterfront café in Piraeus, and agrees to take him to Crete. Most of the book is taken up with the adventures of Zorba, a lesser Ulysses, healthy, happy, roguish, loving women, wine and food, completely lacking in self-division, while Kazantzakis struggles with an epic about the Buddha and renunciation. Again, Kazantzakis reveals a kind of naïveté, like Whitman's praise of the placidness of cows. He is the unhappy intellectual, who never makes the effort to heal his own self-division and become reconciled to the 'original sin' that makes him at once greater and less happy than Zorba. In *Man and Superman*, Shaw makes Don Juan say: 'Were I not possessed with a purpose beyond my own, I had better be a ploughman than a philosopher; for the ploughman lives as long as the philosopher, eats more, sleeps better, and rejoices in the wife of his bosom with less misgiving.' But Shaw had no secret longing to be a ploughman, and the 'purpose' is stated explicitly in the third act of *Man and Superman*. Kazantzakis never reached this stage, although he declared (in *The Saviours of God*) that 'God' is saved by the men who dare to be creative, and wrote in a letter: 'If we are to set a purpose, it is this: to transubstantiate matter and turn it into spirit.' This is certainly Shaw's conception. But there was also a streak of Nietzsche in Kazantzakis. Just as Nietzsche could create his conception of the Superman, and then invalidate it by 'Eternal recurrence', so Kazantzakis expresses his gospel of struggle and creation in *The Saviours of God* but ends: 'Blessed are all those who free you and become united with you, Lord, and who say: "You and I are one". And thrice blessed be those who bear on their

shoulders and do not bend under this great, sublime and terrifying secret: *That even this one does not exist.*' There can hardly be a better example in all philosophy of what the logical positivists call 'nonsense', a statement that invalidates itself by destroying its own meaning.

There is this taint of nonsense about all Kazantzakis's work; but he is far too big and impressive to be invalidated by it. To some extent, one suspects that he creates his own strife out of a perverse love of strife. But then, the same might be said of Dostoevsky. The 'Outsider' easily becomes the neurotic; the self-disciplinarian easily becomes the masochist. Kazantzakis's dissatisfaction was partly frustrated Messianism and partly ordinary 'itchy feet' lack of self-discipline.

The Messianism appears strongly in the later novels. *Christ Recrucified* tells how Manolias, a fair-haired timid young man, is chosen to play Christ in a Passion play. He wants to avoid the burden; but, having accepted it, he becomes steadily more Christ-like. Crowds of dispossessed Greeks come to live outside the village, and the villagers hate them; the boy Manolias takes their part. Eventually, Manolias is ritually murdered by his own villagers; the 'dispossessed' villagers have to move on. Manolias is Kazantzakis's version of Prince Myshkin. Kazantzakis works out his parallel with Christ in some detail, the Turkish Aga being Pilate, the village 'pope' Caiaphas, etc. Again the power of the book lies in the breadth of its canvas, its hundreds of characters, all made to live. It caused Kazaantzakis some trouble; the Greek church wanted to excommunicate him. When he died, the Greek archbishop refused to allow his body to lie in a church; he was later given a hero's burial in Crete. (Although he had irritated the Cretans with *Captain Michalis*, which was regarded as a libel on the Cretan character.)

Having got into trouble with *Christ Recrucified*, Kazantzakis promptly repeated the offence with *The Last Temptation*, this being an immense novel on the life of Christ. Unlike other novelists who have dealt with Jesus, Kazantzakis was not intent on creating a sinless god-man. He wanted to create Christ in his own image—tormented by everlasting temptation, a Promethean Jesus, learning, step by step, to cast off the fetters of the family, the body, the ego, etc. On the cross, the devil sends him a final temptation: he imagines that he had chosen the easier road of men, had become a respected and happy old man, with his family about him. He thrusts aside this temptation to approve the human road, and dies with the sense that he has accomplished his mission, taught men that there are greater values than mere 'living'. The novel is an amazing achievement, simply as a piece of historical re-creation. Whether Kazantzakis's Christ is convincing is another matter. He is rather like Frank Harris's Jesus—a wish-fulfilment aspect of his creator. Kazantzakis wanted to convince himself that all his own sufferings and temptations had somehow been justified: he may have suspected that, after all, he had made rather heavy-weather of being a promethean god-man, flagellated himself a little too vigorously. Perhaps even his master Nietzsche might have dismissed him as another conscience-ridden self-torturer who needed some of Zarathustra's lightness of spirit. One is too aware that his Jesus is a piece of of self-defence, an

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apologia. To be convinced by this Jesus would be to regard Kazantzakis himself as a kind of superman.

Perhaps the nearest literary-relative of Kazantzakis in English-speaking countries is, surprisingly enough, W. B. Yeats. Yeats had the same admiration of the 'pen pusher' for men of action, the same mystique of the wanderer, the same self-division, the same obsession with 'fire and blood' and sex. Yeats also had this idea of the man of genius as a self-consuming flame, and the longing for a mystic vision that would destroy the hunger of the flesh. And Yeats, like Kazantzakis, was no thinker; he expended enormous efforts on feeling at home in the 'realms of intellect', but was never entirely at home there. Kazantzakis had studied under Bergson, but his novels are novels of passion and sensuality, with none of the Dostoevskian dialectic that one might expect from the author of *The Saviours of God*.

In the years before his death, recognition had begun to come to Kazantzakis. His books were translated into many languages, but were not widely read (although *Captain Michalis* became something of a best-seller in Holland). Schweitzer, Thomas Mann and Camus hailed him as one of the greatest European writers. In 1953 he contracted leukemia, and dictated parts of his St Francis novel when in great suffering. In 1956, he was awarded the Soviet Peace Prize (although most of his books were banned in Russia, and he had never been a Communist Party member). It was his incorrigible need to travel that finally brought about his death at seventy-four. He accepted an invitation to visit China, and was accidentally given a smallpox vaccination in Canton. He died in Germany (where Schweitzer came to visit him in hospital).

The final criticism against Kazantzakis is his defeatism, a kind of ultimate nihilism. 'What Purpose?' he asks, in a letter, 'What do we care? Don't ask, fight on! Let us set ourselves a purpose. . . .' 'We must conquer the last, the greatest of temptations—that of hope.' 'We sing even though we know that no ear exists to hear us; we toil though there is no employer to pay us our wages when night falls. We are despairing, serene and free. This is true heroism. . . .' At the end of the *Odyssey*, Ulysses' mind makes a last leap from 'its last cage, that of freedom'. Kazantzakis is a nineteenth-century figure, the religious philosopher crucified on the cross of metaphysics. On Kazantzakis's tomb in Crete are engraved the typical words: 'I do not hope for anything. I do not fear anything. I am free.' It is significant that his epitaph should be a Buddhistic expression of nihilism.

ANGUS WILSON

THE LAST HOURS OF SANDRA LEE by William Sansom. *(Hogarth Press. 16s.)*

Mr Sansom's characters, the social world of his stories and novels are ordinarily neglected by his critics in their attention to the excellence of his prose style. In some degree, Mr Sansom invites this: his control over words, his care for them, are so superior to those of most of us who write novels in England today that they inevitably dazzle and beguile the reader's attention by their unfamiliar excellence. With this love for words goes also a very exact eye, microscopic in its

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focus, turning people into surfaces, colours and textures; and the sharpest of ears reducing human conversation to that recorded inanity and repetition which as in Pinter's plays often dehumanizes by its refusal to select. His work in fact shows us to our astonishment how realism, so usually accounted ponderous though worthy, can be elegant, stylized, witty and deliberately light. In the English bill of fare, heavy with morality, social comment, metaphysical symbol or aggressive commitment, Mr Sansom regularly produces soufflés that receive as regularly a round of clapping as much for their entrancing appearance as for their easy digestibility. But even a novelist as determinedly unassuming, as committed to craft rather than to message, as embarrassed by any sound of big drums as Mr Sansom, inevitably creates by his skills a world to which, even though he may refuse moral force or symbolic significance, he does offer his loyalty by the very fact that he bothers to bring it into being. By refusing to inflate the meaning of his world, Mr Sansom has given it an elegant clarity that must command our respect; but, it is also true that fear of inflation has made him steadily refuse to give his full intellectual involvement to his creation. He has preferred to rely on craft and instinct perhaps because they are less personally vulnerable. This abnegation has not, I think, gone unpunished, for if instinct alone is left to provide moral and intellectual significance to a created world it is likely that sentimentality or jogalong worldly wisdom will assume the place that should have been given to moral commitment or considered judgement. This, I think, happens in Mr Sansom's larger works and, as in *The Last Hours of Sandra Lee*, it poises his creation somewhere strangely between something fine, distinguished, discriminating and something else that belongs to the sweet-sad, gay little heartache world of the sophisticated glossies. To be determinedly minor as Mr Sansom is avoids the treacly, bad-port depths of Book Club profundities, but it does not preserve one from the sparkling Babycham shallows of the magazines.

Perhaps this arises because a novelist, however intelligent, ironic and artistically detached from the world he concerns himself with, must give himself some part of its values, unless he admits himself the pretension of looking at his world from some declared scheme of values. Mr Sansom's world is one that receives surprisingly little attention from contemporary novelists considering how central it is to modern life. It is beautifully assembled in the office party which constitutes the total scene of his new novel—a London office, a glossy office, a world of suburban people, wearing not their home-made, homely English middle class manners, but their 'Americanized', smart, cocktail bar office suits. Mr Sansom knows the whole staff very exactly. The oldest generation of Miss Mavis Cooke with her little home of woollies and calendars built around her desk belongs mostly to the old lower middle class England which still has roots in a Wells world; so does Hearst, with his sentimental loneliness and his near the knuckle, commercial's jokes. Yet about them there is a self-consciousness of the sort of people they must seem in the modern world, a sophistication which no one in Mr Sansom's chic-shabby London can quite be without. In the next generation comes Monica, the smart careers-secretary, inevitably bitching up a dreary affaire with the boss—she seems

already, if I may use a personal reference, to belong to some fading world of my own early stories *The Wrong Set*. Next in generation comes Sandra, the heroine, who wants at this office Christmas party a little real sex (not perhaps quite definite but not also too indefinite) before she marries the nice boy who is to take her off to Sarawak. She is as silly and lovable and maddening as any typist can be, but unlike the glossy-mag stereotype she sometimes resembles, she is imaginative and surprisingly sophisticated. She can dwell for a whole day not only on love dreams but in thoughts of what her colleagues may be like in their scattered homes and she can communicate the fascination of this game of reconstructing people's mantelpieces to the other workers in the office. When she recalls what sex has not brought her, she remembers without too much surprise the boy who only wanted to try on her dress. Mr Sansom, in fact, has caught up with the surprising changed awareness of ordinary people today. And all these characters, in their turn, even so young a girl as Sandra, are thought of as 'oldies' by the teenagers who arrive in a gang, singing and tight on cherry brandy and Babycham, from the typists' pool. An older character reflects of Shelagh Nursbaum, one of these teenage typists—'she intends to spend her summer vacation in a place called Jugoslavia—I-go-nuts. With a couple of Cats and Chicks. She's Ape about Abroad, she said. And this, mind you, is the same lady who daily, on behalf of the Mission, types out long letters about rare esters, about methyl heptanone, colloid mills and even foot-operated tube crimpers. Can you tell me how she reconciles these two assumably separate worlds?'

One feels that Mr Sansom longs to know, too, how all these characters of his combine their shrewdness and powers of imagination and sympathy with such tasteless chic and tawdry, pathetic smart-aleckry and so on. He knows the world he writes of inside out; he knows also that it is far more central to modern life in many ways than the much vaunted Establishment of C. P. Snow or the great healing working-class myth of Mr Raymond Williams. The people in my books, one hears Mr Sansom say, are the ordinary people of city life today. I'm sure that he is right and I'm sure that he is right, too, not to make the easy, conventional moral judgements about their materialism, their sloppy sex, their confused standards. But in avoidance of that easy judgement and in his refusal to set his world against any moral judgement of his own, it is inevitable that his affection and compassion for his characters should slip every now and again into the sort of magazine sentimentalism in which they themselves indulge, his inonic good sense degenerate now and again into the saloon bar cynicism by which they comfort themselves. Like Mr Colin McInnes, he really knows modern urban life, detests the cant with which so-called superior moralists attack it, wants to celebrate its vitality and variety; yet inevitably by refusing to permit themselves even their aesthetic superiority to the world they celebrate, he and Mr McInnes, both careful craftsmen, produce works that are muddied and blurred by the defects that they prefer not to condemn.

GEORGE MACBETH

A TROPICAL CHILDHOOD by Edward Lucie-Smith. *(O.U.P. 10s. 6d.)*

THE RAILINGS by Alan Brownjohn. *(The Digby Press. 12s. 6d.)*

Two first collections have recently been published by poets who have been appearing regularly in the best literary magazines for the last six or seven years. They establish Edward Lucie-Smith and Alan Brownjohn as among the ten or twelve most interesting English poets under the age of thirty-five.

A *Tropical Childhood* is perhaps the more immediately obvious success of the two. The purity of his metre and rhyme, the clarity of his language and, perhaps most strikingly, the sensuous richness of his diction and imagery mark out Edward Lucie-Smith as a poet capable of reaching a very large public. There is scarcely one poem out of forty-three in his book which fails to achieve what it sets out to do. He writes equally well about a wide range of themes: about the death of his father, about National Service in peacetime (a rarely treated subject among poets of his generation), about works of art, about insects and birds and about the island in the West Indies where he was born and lived until he was twelve. The title of his book is well chosen. The bright sunlight of the Caribbean landscape seems to have imparted a clarity and a glitter to Mr Lucie-Smith's handling of every subject he touches: his eye for detail has a kind of microscopic exactness which reminds me at times of Charles Tennyson Turner's. At its best, as in the last line of a poem on learning of the death of his father, its sensitivity can

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MACMILLAN

turn inwards and become a sharp insight which is expressed with a jewelled vividness:

Pride, like a goldfish, flashed a sudden fin.

One consequence of this combination of naturalness and clarity in strict traditional forms is that Mr Lucie-Smith's work has an air of existing without current relatives or recent ancestors. A line describing the sound a pane of glass makes on a frosty day:

Cracks in the cold with a subdued report

might have been written by Coleridge. There are well-written poems in *A Tropical Childhood* on capital punishment and on the Nazi concentration camps but they seem to say less about the problems of violence than some of the more personal poems about watching rook-shooting or burning lead soldiers in a bonfire. In the first poem of the book Mr Lucie-Smith refers to the time when

a dead grasshopper
Devoured by ants before my captive eye
Made the sun dark, yet distant battles were
Names in a dream, outside geography.

He has never lost this capacity to enter into the experience of suffering things he has known, and the last poem in the book 'On Looking at Stubbs' "Anatomy of the Horse" ' has the lines:

Fingering the margins I think of the old
Sway-backed and broken nags the pictures killed.

Mr Lucie-Smith is an art-collector and an art-critic and this appreciation of the tension between the cruelty of life and the harmony of art is one of his major strengths. The danger facing a poet of great technical facility is that he may be content never to overreach himself. I would have welcomed more signs in this book of an attempt to break the moulds and embark on work in a looser form and perhaps on a more ambitious, or at any rate larger, scale. It would be a pity if Mr Lucie-Smith's eventual reputation were to stand no higher than José-Maria Hérédia's.

The Railings is a book which bears more signs of internal strain than *A Tropical Childhood*. It begins with four or five rather weak poems and its strongest parts seem to me to be in the middle. Critics will find it much easier to pick out striking individual poems in Mr Brownjohn's book than in Mr Lucie-Smith's. 'A Teacher of The Deaf' (which I think good) and 'William Empson at Aldermaston' (which I think bad) are both immediately recognizable as more ambitious, and in some ways more original, pieces than others in this book. Nevertheless it is in a central group of perhaps twenty seemingly slighter poems that I myself think Mr Brownjohn's main achievement so far is to be found. Poems like 'For a Journey' and 'Marginalia' are extraordinarily effective in employing a sustained image so naturally that the whole poem can be interpreted perfectly adequately at two levels. 'Marginalia', for example, can be taken either as a light-hearted fancy based on a childhood recollection or (as it is surely meant to be taken) as an ironic political commentary. Here is the first stanza to show what I mean:

When it was Munich, I was eight.
Miss Adams made her point like this:
'Without a ruler no one can
Draw me a line that's truly straight.'

And thus, to make her meaning plain:
'Not even any famous man:
Herr Hitler. Mr Chamberlain.'

Mr Brownjohn is, I take it from his poems, a man who pities suffering more than he admires energy; but he has made a careful attempt to understand the psychology of the kind of person Auden called 'the vertical man' and he has an excellent little poem on what it feels like to be an eminent person in old age:

The middle-afternoon is the worst of
the blanks.
Shuffle the four equal armies of the
contentious cards
And manoeuvre those. Or failing that,
indict for yourself
In a never-to-be-written recollection,
your successful
Colleague of some brisk campaign.
The minor consolations
Of the manageable evening arrive the
faster
For either, or both, of these applications of power.

There's a subtle blend of irony and compassion in this which is largely conveyed, as so often in Mr Brownjohn's work, by a fastidiousness in choice of epithets and an involuted rhythmical movement which slows the pace of the poem and forces the reader to think what it means as he goes along. This last device is Mr Brownjohn's main technical innovation. It is one very easy to miss. He may strike some readers as too like Philip Larkin in his odd combination of melancholy and wit. He certainly seems to be both amused and concerned by some of his themes; but his love poems (which are excellent) seem more involved with a particular person than Larkin's and his social conscience is more explicitly active in what he writes. The reason for the similarity is perhaps that both Larkin and Brownjohn work in the tradition of Auden, Graves and Empson which has formed so much of the best English poetry of the last fifteen years.

I should like to be able to end by drawing a comparison between these two poets which would ultimately favour one or the other. I find this impossible to do. Perhaps (to adjust Dr Johnson's distinction) one reads Mr Brownjohn with more frequent astonishment and Mr Lucie-Smith with more sustained delight; but this is, if true, only an approximate judgement. Certainly no one who is concerned about the current state of English poetry should fail to buy, study and keep both of these excellent first books.

Contributors

JACK COPE was born on a Natal farm, now lives in Cape Town. His first novel, *The Fair House*, was published in England in 1955. MALCOLM LOWRY, author of *Under the Volcano*, died at Ripe in Sussex in 1957. Before settling in Mexico, the scene of most of his work, he spent some years at sea. A collection of his shorter fiction, *Hear Us, O Lord*, is to appear soon. GORDON MEYER, born in London in 1919, was educated at Cranleigh and Worcester College, Oxford. He served in the Navy during the war, since when he has been in business in South America. Two previous stories of his have appeared in *The London Magazine*, and he is at work on a novel. FRANCIS FYTTON'S story, *The Paras*, appeared in our August issue. He lives in Paris, in the Latin Quarter, and works with Agence France-Presse. LIONEL BRETT was the architect-planner of Hatfield New Town, has contributed numerous articles to architectural reviews, and is the author of the Penguin *Houses*. JULIAN MITCHELL, whose first novel, *Imaginary Toys*, was published earlier this year, has recently returned from two years on a Harkness Fellowship in the United States. DENIS DONOGHUE teaches at University College, Dublin. His book, *The Third Voice*, was a study of modern verse drama.

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